



# FIRE FOR EFFECT

ROYALS TAKE THE FIGHT TO THE FOE

GREAT EASTERN  
A TASTE OF CHINA  
FOR HMS KENT

NOBLE ACTIONS  
HUNTING MINES  
IN THE MED

END OF DAYS  
ARMISTICE 1918  
SUPPLEMENT

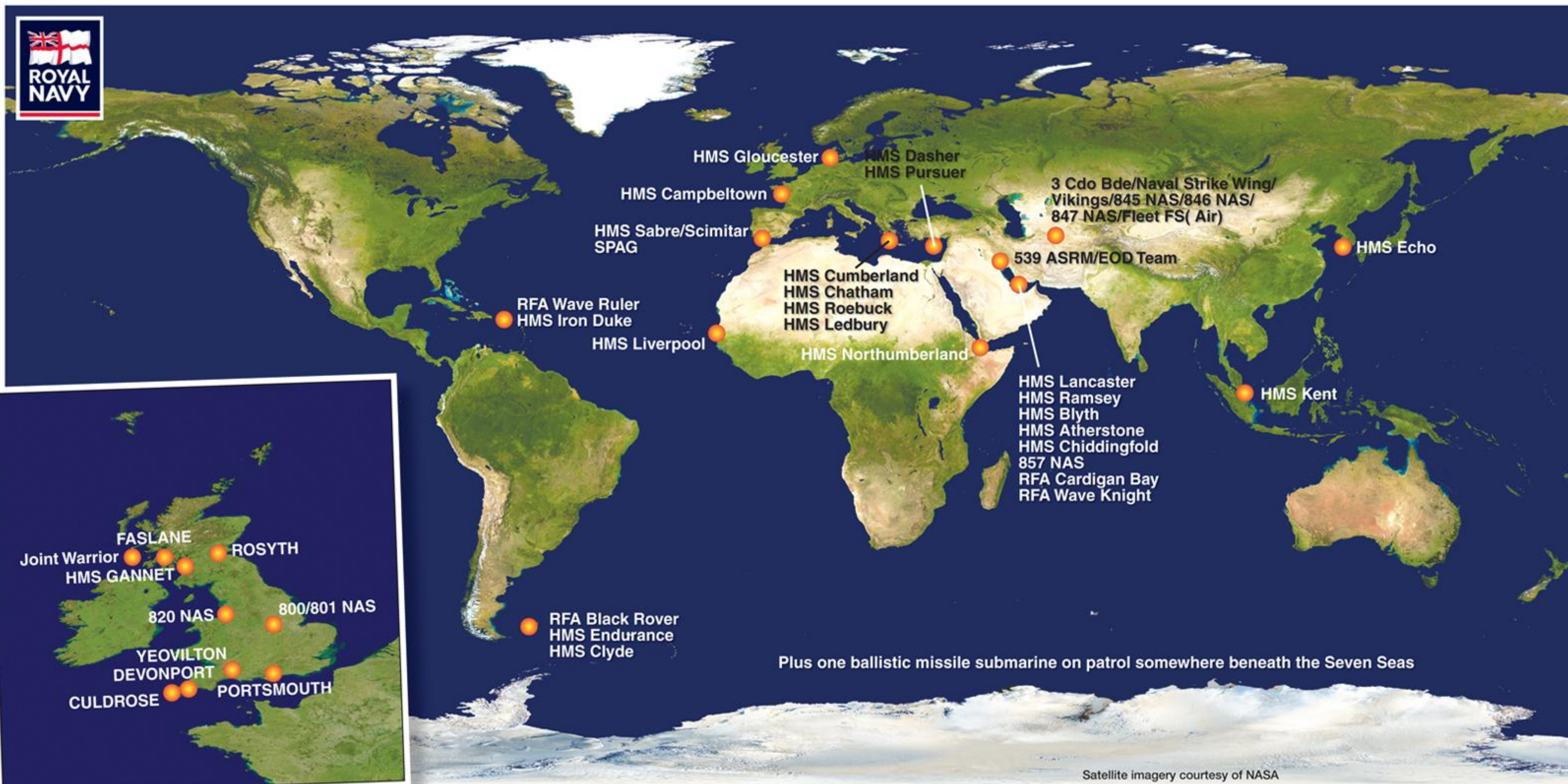
A Sea Dart missile races away from HMS Manchester at twice the speed of sound during a High Seas Firing. After successfully destroying the aerial target, the destroyer headed up the Clyde to escort the legendary liner QE2 on her farewell tour. See page 17 for details.







# GLOBAL REACH



## Fleet Focus

AS YOU might expect from their nature, the men of **3 Commando Brigade** have hit the ground running on beginning their tour of duty in Afghanistan.

**42 Commando** has conducted a series of aggressive patrols around Kandahar while the Taliban revealed their presence to **45 Commando** in Sangin. The latter, and other British units in theatre, depend on the **Commando Logistic Regiment** to support their operations. See pages 14-15 for a round-up from the region.

Several hundred miles to the south, **HMS Lancaster** has relieved **HMS Chatham** of her duties safeguarding Iraq's oil platforms in rather stormy weather (see page 5). Following Chatham on the long road home shortly will be HM Ships **Blyth** and **Ramsey** whose two-year stint in the Gulf is drawing to a close (see page 4).

**HMS Montrose** is already home from the Gulf region after a successful drug-busting patrol (see page 4).

Oddly, it is not Afghanistan, or even Iraq, which have dominated the military news agency in the past month, but piracy. Talk of **HMS Northumberland's** involvement in the crackdown on piracy have been somewhat exaggerated, but the frigate is patrolling waters off Somalia and the Gulf of Aden (see page 7).

She'll soon be joined east of Suez by **HMS Cumberland** attached to a NATO task group (see page 5) and by **HMS Kent**, heading west after her Far Eastern odyssey, which most recently took her to Qingdao and Hong Kong (see page 8).

Nearby (relatively speaking...), survey ship **HMS Echo** has been taking part in a South Korean fleet review in Pusan (see right).

In the Mediterranean, **HMS Roebuck** led a major NATO minehunting exercise involving **HMS Ledbury** among other Allied vessels (see the centre pages).

Half a world away, **HMS Iron Duke** is continuing her Caribbean patrol (see page 13).

**HMS Endurance** has left Africa behind and is preparing for a return to the frozen continent (see page 5) while **HMS Liverpool** is edging up the African west coast promoting partnership with local navies and governments (see the same page).

In home waters, it's farewell to Britain's oldest serving submarine, **HMS Superb**, which paid off in Devonport after more than three decades' service (see page 6).

Another stalwart bowing out is the air transport and communications unit, **Heron Flight** based at Yeovilton, whose place will now be taken by civilian air transport (see page 6).

While Super Bee leaves the Fleet, **HMS Daring** is on the cusp of joining it after completing her final sea trials (see opposite).

Also off the north-west coast of Scotland, a large fleet of British and Allied warships gathered for the latest Joint Warrior exercise (previously Neptune Warrior and Joint Maritime Course), including **HMS Illustrious** which has been working up with RAF Harriers (see page 9).

Another British participant in Joint Warrior was **HMS Manchester**, which arrived on the Clyde escorting the QE2 on the liner's farewell visit to the river of her birth (see page 17).

Further south, new Fleet submarine **HMS Astute** re-emerged from the huge hall which has been her home since initial trials in 2007 (see page 5).

Astute has yet to go to sea; one submarine which has seen a decade's service is **HMS Vigilant**, now out of action for at least three years as she begins a mammoth refit in Devonport (see page 7).

Also back in Devonport (briefly) was helicopter carrier **HMS Ocean** after completing her initial trials following a refit. She's now out again undergoing Operational Sea Training (see page 5).

And finally... the RN photographic branch has been the mainstay of this newspaper for five decades. Its archives are held by the **Imperial War Museum**, who kindly let us 'rummage around' and air some hidden treasures (see pages 26-27).

## Echo enjoys a Korea change

FLEET reviews are neither the preserve of the Royal Navy nor purely the domain of Spithead as **HMS Echo** found.

5,706½ miles (the ½ is important – Ed) as the crow flies from the RN's most famous roadstead, the survey ship joined two dozen warships off the port of Pusan for the Republic of Korea (ROK) International Fleet Review.

The Koreans promised an experience crammed with unforgettable memories... which began as soon as Echo came alongside in the southern port.

CO Cdr Gary Brooks was greeted by two youngsters in traditional garb who promptly placed a flower garland around his neck.

He and some of his sailors then gathered aboard two of South Korea's newest ships, Munmu the Great and Chungmugong Yi Sunshin (good score at Scrabble – Ed) for an official reception/welcome with national delicacies, dancing and music... although the final tune of the evening was rather more universal: *In The Navy*, performed against a stunning fireworks backdrop.

The next day, the international force sailed for the formal review.

A line of 23 foreign vessels centred on the American carrier USS George Washington, were inspected by South Korean President Lee Myung-bak aboard the destroyer Sejong the Great.

With the formal part of the review completed – including a hearty cheer from Echo's ship's company as Sejong sailed past – war erupted.

Korean forces staged a major demonstration of sea and air power, culminating in an amphibious assault involving all ROK vessels and aircraft taking part in the review.

War done, the assorted ships returned to Pusan's two principal naval bases.

Throughout her stay, Echo was hosted by the minelayer Won San, whose officers invited some of their counterparts across for 'tea and tiffin' (well, more local delicacies in reality) and gave the Brits a rare insight into life in the ROK Navy.

The most humbling part of the visit came at the UN memorial cemetery outside Pusan.



● Echo's sailors pay their respects to Korean War dead at the UN memorial cemetery in Pusan

There 885 British servicemen who lost their lives during the three-year struggle to prevent communist forces overrunning the south of the country are commemorated.

XO Lt Cdr Derek Rae led a small group of the ship's company to the cemetery, a graveyard since 1951 and a memorial to the fallen of the 1950-53 war since 1955, and laid a wreath.

On a lighter note, the 'Echoers' were invited to watch an evening of Korean culture – martial arts, magic, dancing and folk music.

"Everyone who attended was in awe at the sheer spectacle – and was extremely impressed at the effort and organisation which had gone into producing the event," said Lt Marie Whitehouse, Echo's meteorological officer.

The colour didn't end there. All the various ships partaking in the review were invited to send platoons for a parade through the heart of Pusan for the city's annual Jagalchi festival – a celebration of seafaring and fish.

Sailors – in Echo's case led by operations officer Lt Cdr Suzannah Hung RAN who was decorated with a flower garland – marched around the shopping district of the port waving national

flags before being treated to yet more Korean dancing and drumming.

"The ROK Navy promised us unforgettable memories from the start of the review – and that is certainly what we're taking away with us," said Cdr Brooks.

He joined the ship in Hong Kong where his successor, Cdr Jeremy Churcher bade farewell to Echo after nearly three years in charge.

One of Cdr Brooks' first duties was to lead a delegation to Stanley Military Cemetery – not one of largest burial grounds in Hong Kong, but one of the oldest and also one which hosts a newly-commissioned monument to the hundreds of Chinese nationals who lost their lives in the two global wars at sea in the 20th Century.

Echo is in the early stages of a five-year deployment (the longest by any vessel in recent RN history) to chart the world's oceans and update hydrographic data.

To sustain such an odyssey the Devonport-based survey ship operates three watches – red, white and blue – with one watch in the UK on R&R or courses at any one time.

And to ensure that in spite of such constant rotation, Team

Echo remains just that, a team, the sailors were 'delighted' to welcome aboard the expert trainers and assessors from the Flag Officer Sea Training for five days of intensive instruction in the Far East.

FOSTies left the Hamoaze behind and flew half-way around the globe for what they call 'Directed Continuation Training' – a sort of MOT which ensures that standards are maintained on deployment and allows a ship to continue its far-flung duties.

And so for five days off Brunei, fire, flood, war, men overboard, breakdowns, and other trials and tribulations rocked Echo by day and night as blue and white watches 'enjoyed' the full FOST experience.

In between responding to the various tests set by the FOSTies, the ship's company were given lectures on damage control techniques, first aid and fire fighting procedures.

And despite all this going on, Echo continued her survey operations which included deploying her survey motor boat Pathfinder.

The FOSTies were evidently satisfied, as the survey ship is continuing her marathon patrol. But they'll be back – the team visits every six months to make sure ships' companies are on the ball; they're back on Echo in the spring.

■ Kent in Hong Kong, page 8





# Dawn of Daring

THE day of Daring is coming.

The destroyer of tomorrow will soon be the destroyer of today after the futuristic-looking warship completed her final set of sea trials.

Having demonstrated on her first two trips to sea that she's as fast, economical and manoeuvrable (and in some cases more so) as laid down in the specifications, it was time to begin testing Daring's fighting ability – in particular her communications kit, combat radar and command systems.

For without those Daring is 'just' a ship, not a warship. Her state-of-the-art technology must possess the ability to 'talk' to other state-of-the-art systems.

Good job the 'conversation' thrived, then. Over five weeks of intensive trials around the Scottish coast, a mix of RN and BVT (formerly BAE Systems-Vosper Thornycroft) engineers, warfare experts and communications specialists tested the software and systems to their limit.

At the hub of the Type 45 destroyer's combat system is FICS (Fully-Integrated Communications System) – a dazzling melting pot of satellite, High, Very High and Ultra-High Frequency comms, radio, internet and email.

To test that hub, 30 people – the equivalent of one sixth



of the ship's company – logged in from all parts of Daring and conducted a wide range of typical RN business (radio chatter, signals, emails) and not so typical RN business (video conferencing at sea with a land-based team).

For the growing number of ship's company, this was their first time at sea in Daring, so they took their time to get to know her layout and her systems as well, conducting various training before they formally move aboard.

Which isn't long off. Daring's sailors are currently living in (quite nice) apartments ashore in Glasgow.

But next month the destroyer will be officially handed over to the RN before bringing the ship down to her future home of Portsmouth at the end of January.

As Daring prepares to depart the yard at Scotstoun, her younger sister Dauntless heads down the Clyde this month to begin her sea trials which, thanks to the extensive work involving Daring, won't be quite as drawn out.



picture: lafphot del trotter, frpu north





# Coming in from the warmth

AN icy wind could not take the sheen off the warm welcome from 600 loved ones and friends who greeted the sailors of HMS Montrose after seven months away.

The Devonian weather was probably a shock to the system for the Type 23 frigate's crew who have spent the bulk of the deployment sizzling in the Gulf and Indian Ocean, with temperatures topping 50°C at their peak.

Despite such heat, work had to go on as normal – and Montrose's efforts safeguarding the seas and keeping criminal activity in check resulted in the biggest drugs bust of the year by Allied naval forces east of Suez.

In a gruelling, sweaty, dirty operation, the frigate's boarding party found hashish and heroin stashed in a secret compartment. The drugs had a street value of around £20m.

That bust was part of a concerted effort by Allied naval units, and the RN in particular, to tackle narcotics trafficking: the combined efforts of HM Ships Montrose, Chatham, Edinburgh and RFA Argus (plus her surveillance Sea Kings) resulted in British vessels seizing 23 tonnes of drugs.

"I am extremely proud of my ship's company, they have worked really hard in harsh conditions," said Montrose's CO Cdr Andy Hogben.

"We had several successes out there and the major one was the biggest ever seizure of illegal drugs in the region.

It only dawned on us later that the drugs we were destroying were being taken off the streets of Britain – the real reward of our efforts."

Equal reward no doubt was the sizeable welcome for the frigate on the Devonport jetty.

"It's fantastic to come home to such a warm welcome. It is great to see so many families on the jetty," Cdr Hogben added.

"My ship's company have been waiting for this moment for seven months and it more than makes up for the time away from them.

"I must say 'thank you' to the families on behalf of the whole ship – without their emotional and practical support back home while we have been away in the Middle East this would have been a harder job than it already was."

HMS Northumberland has temporarily taken over from Montrose in the region, although she'll soon be heading for the South Atlantic.

As for Montrose, she sails for Rosyth next month. After four major deployments in four years, she's in need of some TLC.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Sterratt, FRPU



## French, Germans and Scots

THE number of men and women aboard HMS Campbeltown has fallen sevenfold as the frigate knuckles down to 12 months of refit.

Before arriving in Rosyth, the Devonport-based warship visited the two most important places with which she is indelibly linked: St Nazaire and the Scottish town.

The former owes its ties with the ship to a daring raid 66 years ago. Operation Chariot, led by a former US destroyer HMS Campbeltown, was meant to knock out the dry dock facilities to prevent Germany's capital ships from using them.

Explosives crammed into Campbeltown's bow wrecked the dry dock as intended (it would not be put back into use until 1947) and killed 250 Germans clearing up after the raid.

Five VCs were awarded in the aftermath of the raid, one to Campbeltown's CO that fateful day, Lt Cdr Stephen Beattie.

Six decades later, his sons Nick and Tim Beattie – members of the St Nazaire Association – sailed with today's Campbeltown, as did Chariot survivor Steven Barney, a veteran of HMS Atherstone.

The people of St Nazaire honour the men of Chariot as much as today's Campbeltown sailors: French and Britons stood side by side at a memorial service for those who lost their lives in the raid, before moving to the port's town hall for a reception.

After the solemnity of France, the frigate's last visit to her namesake town before entering refit proved rather more upbeat.

The ship hosted a reception and took affiliates, including local Sea Cadets, to sea for the day.

And while the warship was tied up at a jetty, a working party headed ashore to construct a path and decking area for a local care home, while another 30 sailors got stuck in with a beach clean – and were rewarded for their efforts with a barbecue.

From Campbeltown it was on to the Firth of Forth and preparations for the multi-million-pound revamp in Rosyth.

## Readying for the long road home

WHILE their ships geared up for the long journey home, eight sailors from HMS Ramsey and Blyth headed to the tip of the Gulf to share their expertise with Iraqi counterparts.

From Ramsey, Navigator Lt Marc Taylor, bosun CPO Burridge and ABs Tony Carr and 'Pooley' Poole joined RFA Cardigan Bay (16,000 tons to Ramsey's 600) which is key to training Iraqi sailors and marines.

The landing support ship is the hub for instruction and guidance provided by the RN-led Naval Transition Team.

The octet observed various training exercises, provided input to the instruction to Iraqi marines and then joined Iraqi boarding parties on, er, boarding ops around the KAAOT and ABOT oil terminals whose protection is at the heart of their mission.

"It was a great experience to witness both the work of NaTT and the vital operations in the northern Gulf," said

Lt Taylor.

As for the rest of the ship's company, they were toiling hard to prepare Ramsey for the 8,300-nautical-mile journey from Bahrain, the base for RN operations in the Gulf, to Faslane.

The holy month of Ramadan meant that life in the normally bustling state has been rather quieter than normal, but there's been enough in the impressive – and modern – US base to keep the sailors occupied during downtime, including a swimming pool.

Ramsey's crew were enticed by a 'grand' prize to swim the Channel – 40km or 800 lengths. Those who succeeded proudly walked away with a T-shirt. And the sailors also joined the ex-pat community for a charity auction, which raised more than £4,000 for Help for

Heroes. Nearly ten per cent of that total came courtesy of one bidder who paid £400 to have two of Ramsey's chefs (sorry, logisticians (catering services (preparation))) pop around their house to prepare a meal.

Ramsey's partner on the Aintree deployment, HMS Blyth, has also been a hive of activity as her ship's company prepare the mine countermeasures vessel for the trip home.

Whilst the Ramseys have been in the pool, football has been the mainstay of Blyth's sporting activities... and rather more basic facilities at the HQ of US Fifth Fleet. 'Soccer' isn't one of the Americans' preferred sports, so the Blyth footballers reverted to jumpers for goalposts.

Ramsey and Blyth comprise the Sandown part of the Aintree deployment; Hunts Chiddingfold and Atherstone make up the remainder of the force – they only arrived in the Gulf earlier this year, so it will be some time before they return to Blyth.



## Merlin flies with Eaglets

AIRCREW from 820 NAS headed to the unfamiliar surroundings of Merseyside to help local reservists carry out training.

They took a Merlin (after a brief pit stop on the way to refuel) to RAF Woodvale near Southport to a weekend exercise with the North West's naval reservist unit, HMS Eaglet.

The Culdrose fliers dropped in to demonstrate the £40m helicopter's load lifting ability (and its very potent downdraught as well).

Or at least they did for one day of the weekend. Sadly the local weather (North West, autumn, rain – you get the picture) curbed any flying on the Sunday.

But that did give the airmen a chance to show a sizeable number of Air Training Corps cadets around the helicopter, followed by dozens of university students.

Still, Saturday proved rather busy.

A group of senior RN officers clambered in the back of the cab to view Merseyside from the skies.

For the rank and file, arrangements were rather more rudimentary... at least one Eaglet was winched aboard the Merlin as the 820 team demonstrated the helicopter's Search and Rescue role, before lifting and shifting some loads at Altar camp on Merseyside, home to the training exercise.

The weather improved sufficiently by Monday for the Merlin to return to Cornwall and rejoin its five sisters as the squadron hones its anti-submarine and maritime patrol skills before joining a carrier for exercises.

■ Squadron of the Month, page 12

Picture: LA(Phot) Carl Osmond, RNAS Culdrose





## Liverpool's African odyssey

JUST AS HMS Endurance was leaving African shores (see right), HMS Liverpool was taking her place.

The veteran destroyer has completed her work around the Falklands and South America and is edging her way home via South and West Africa.

The first port of call (after a very rough crossing of the Southern Ocean) was Cape Town, home to Liverpool for eight days.

The visit coincided with a major trade show – the African Air Defence Exhibition – with defence firms showcasing anti-air warfare kit.

As an air defence destroyer, Liverpool was the obvious setting for British companies to show off their wares.

Aside from the various VIPs, military leaders and business representatives, the Type 42 hosted more than 1,500 members of the South African public, eager to tour a British warship and watch various demonstrations, including fire-fighting and damage control.

Despite the ship taking part in the trade fair for six days, there was plenty of downtime for her ship's company.

Some sailors went shark diving (presumably *with* rather than *on* sharks, but you never know with matelots...), others headed for the vineyards, went sand boarding ('surfing' on sand dunes), or even on one-day safaris.

There was another defence industry showcase in Angola, Liverpool's next port of call, before the destroyer picked up Lt Kwasi Donkor of the Ghanaian Navy for passage from Sekondi in his native land to Dakar so he could witness the RN at work, and especially so he could watch the ship conducting gunnery serials and maritime security work.

Next up was Sierra Leone and more goodwill work with local authorities.

Liverpool's Lynx took two government ministers airborne.

The first sortie gave the deputy minister of fisheries and marine resources a bird's-eye view of the coast – and some of the illegal fishing taking place there.

The second flight saw the minister for defence given a tour of the Freetown peninsula, with the principal aim of identifying sites where illegal logging was taking place.

## Golden sausage

IT IS not just mine warfare forces which possess the Midas touch.

No, HMS Cumberland has had a golden hue to her too.

The Type 22 frigate is currently attached to a NATO task force (Maritime Group 2) which joined the mine countermeasures vessels (Group 1 – see the centre pages) for the fortnight-long Noble Midas war game.

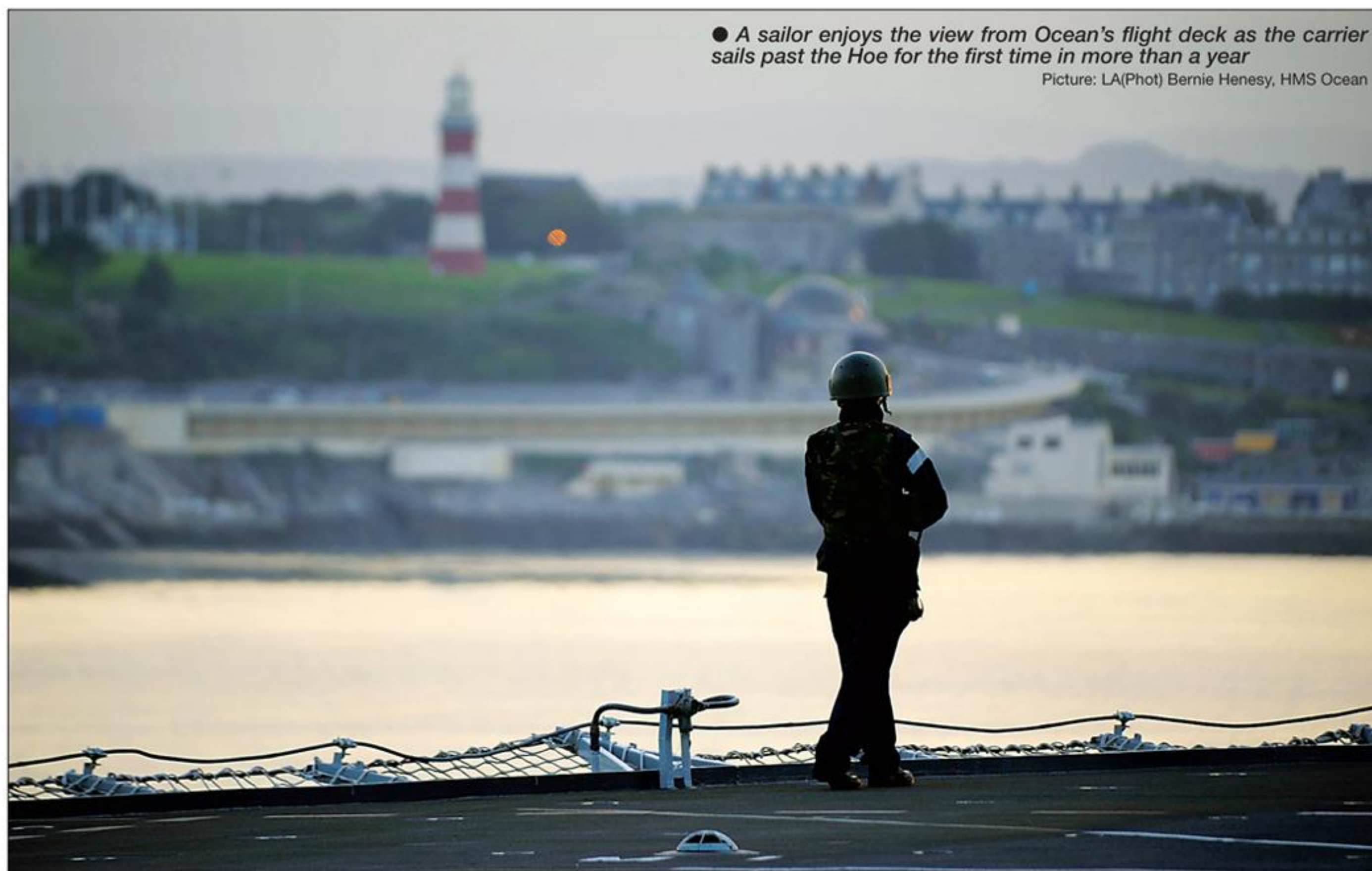
The Mighty Sausage spent several days testing her sensors in the NATO ranges around Crete before two weeks of intensive exercises – in particular complex and sustained submarine hunting and anti-air exercises.

After the first phase of Midas, the mine warfare forces forgot about their *raison d'être* and decided to play the role of troublesome merchantmen and warships determined to ignore a UN embargo.

So it's a good job Group 2 was around, for its *raison d'être* is to stop illegal activities on the high seas.

Once Midas was done, Cumberland headed once again for Cretan waters to meet her sister Chatham, returning from the Gulf (see right).

Chatham is now homeward bound for Plymouth, while Cumberland and her NATO partners are making a rare foray as a task force east of Suez.



● A sailor enjoys the view from Ocean's flight deck as the carrier sails past the Hoe for the first time in more than a year

Picture: LA(Phot) Bernie Henesy, HMS Ocean

# Cheery O after trials

A YEAR after beginning a £35m revamp, HMS Ocean has completed her first steps along the road to front-line duties once more.

Britain's largest warship sailed through two weeks of trials and tests – the first time she'd been at sea in more than 14 months.

The helicopter carrier was in the hands of Babcock Marine (formerly DML) in Devonport for the past year.

Its employees and Ocean's ship's company have worked on Ocean from 'top to tail', improving living spaces both for the sailors and her embarked Royal Marines, installing a new galley, fitting enhanced communications systems and improved weapon defences.

All of which received a thorough going over during the fortnight of training – partly under the auspices of staff from the Flag Officer Sea Training, who were keen to see whether the helicopter carrier's sailors could cope with fire, flood, breakdowns and damage.

With the FOSTies suitably satisfied (and they're not easily impressed), Ocean's crew moved on to testing her combat systems: the accuracy of her radars was analysed and every gun was fired, including her Phalanx cannon (3,000 which obliterated a target towed by an aircraft).

"Ocean has come a very long way in the last few months," said Commanding Officer Capt Simon Kings.

"When we moved back on board in July, the

size and scope of the work yet to be completed was daunting.

"The crew and Babcock made tremendous progress."

And although she's bristling with military kit and green berets, she's a little kinder to the world around her now she's emerged from refit. Her hull is covered with an environmentally-friendly paint, while inside a state-of-the-art waste disposal system – the first of its type in the RN – has been installed to cope with Ocean's gash.

The Mighty O is now back in the hands of the FOSTies who are putting the ship and her sailors through the rigours of Operational Sea Training before the carrier sails with a major amphibious deployment in the New Year.

# Bringing order to KAAOT

THE latest ship to serve as a reassuring presence to tanker crews and fishermen off the coast of Iraq is HMS Lancaster.

It has taken six weeks to bring the Red Rose ship from Portsmouth, Round and Spinnaker Towers and all that, to the head of the Gulf and the rather less attractive KAAOT and ABOT oil terminals.

The frigate has taken over from HMS Chatham as guardian of the two huge pumping platforms and environs which are responsible for generating nine out of every ten dinar in the Iraq economy.

The latter warship should be getting home to Devonport right about now after a summer doing exactly what Lancaster is currently carrying out.

So it made sense that the veteran shared her experiences with the newcomer.

"We've learned many lessons in the time we've been in theatre – whether they're patterns of life, modes of operating or equipment performance, there's much that will be invaluable to our counterparts in Lancaster," said Chatham's weapon engineer officer Lt Cdr Chris Smith.

His CO, Cdr Martin Connell – a former principal warfare officer in Lancaster – added: "We've had an extremely successful deployment, carrying out extensive operations in demanding conditions."

"My people and equipment have performed exceptionally – and we feel we've made a tangible difference to safety

and security in the region."

The weather won't be quite as much of an issue for the Red Rose frigate as it was for the Mighty At 'Em (at its worst it reached 50°C – 122°F – and 100 per cent humidity around Chatham) but last month it was still 38°C – 100°F – at the height of the day.

And also on the wane are the *shamals* (winds) which deposit an impenetrable wall of sand upon the Gulf in the summer.

One such sandstorm closed Bahrain port the very day Lancaster arrived to assume Chatham's duties.

*Shamals* are the exception, not the rule – and when not bringing tons of sand, they take the edge off the Middle East sun.

If you've never been to the tip of the Gulf – and there aren't too many in the surface fleet these days who haven't – then allow Lancaster's Surg Lt Nic 'The Doc' Dodds (the ship's surgeon, if you hadn't already guessed) to paint the picture:

Around us, small dhows, their hulls and business unchanged for centuries, fish serenely.

The best fishing is to be had among the flotsam, and decaying metal detritus on the sea bed surrounding the two oil platforms.

Current security operations can't allow for dhows or unidentified vessels to come too close.

As fishermen do start to stray, and

as their vessels are picked up on radar, warships turn to face them off. Mostly the incursions around the monitored waters of the oil platforms are just the fishermen cutting corners to return home or following a shoal of fish.

But not always, and this thought makes for some intense concentration on the bridge and in the operations room.

Aside from keeping an eye on the well-being of the Red Rose ship's company, it's the doc's job to offer assistance to the dhow crews.

Lancaster's boarding parties check inventories and conduct thorough searches of vessels in these troubled waters, but they also carry 'goody bags': water, food and also first-aid kits – emblazoned with the RN logo – put together by the medical officer so the fishermen can treat the many infections, scratches, cuts and the like they pick up day-to-day as they go about their onerous craft.

"Forget what you thought about the monotony – or serenity – of a warship on the high seas."

"The intensity and necessity of what this ship does on a daily basis to carry out its mission is way beyond what I thought or imagined when we set sail," said Surg Lt Dodds.

Picture: LA(Phot) Brian Douglas, FRPU Clyde



## The heat is off the Red Plum

NO MORE basking in the African sun for the Red Plum. HMS Endurance has completed her rare foray into warmer climes and is gearing up for a return to the ice.

The Antarctic survey ship is currently undergoing some 'top-up training' from the Flag Officer Sea Training organisation before she resumes her more typical mission: charting the waters of the frozen continent.

Endurance has spent the austral winter in South and West Africa spreading the 'action on climate change' message as part of a unique 18-month deployment intended to make better use of the Portsmouth-based hydrographic vessel.

If the pressure of having the exacting FOST team aboard wasn't enough, it's all being captured on camera.

Hot on the heels of the popular *Warship* programme which featured HMS Illustrious earlier this year, a four-strong documentary team from Channel 5 is joining the survey ship for the next five months, providing a permanent record of her work around Antarctica.

## Astute back in the water

FUTURE hunter-killer submarine HMS Astute has re-emerged from the huge shed which has been her home for the past year.

But any hopes of the boat joining the RN this year have been dashed: it will be next year before the 7,400-tonne fleet submarine is formally handed over to the Senior Service by BAE Systems.

Astute was launched to a fanfare in June 2007 with her sponsor, the Duchess of Cornwall, presiding over the occasion.

Following that launch, she conducted several trials and tests in a special flooded dry dock at Barrow, including her first dive.

But the various tests also saw her turbo generators damaged: a specialist firm had to be called in to remove scoring on shafts caused when they ran dry when oil pumps failed.

Astute has also been hit by problems dogging her electrical systems and valves.

Although she was due to return to the Devonshire Dock Hall at Barrow, her time in the gigantic shed was extended by several months thanks to these faults.

Still, the boat is now finally back in the water again, although dates for her sea trials – and first appearance in Faslane, her future home – have still to be set.

## All change at the top

FIRST Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jonathon Band will stand down as Britain's senior sailor next summer.

The admiral will retire as Chief of the Naval Staff on July 21.

His place will be taken by Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope.

Admiral Stanhope's post in turn will be taken by Vice Admiral Trevor Soar who is currently Chief of Material Fleet, Defence Equipment and Support.

The appointments are mirrored by a similar series of changes across the three Services in the summer of 2009.

General Sir David Richards will replace General Sir Richard Dannatt as Chief of the General Staff, while Air Chief Marshal Sir Glenn Torpy stands down as head of the RAF with Air Marshal Stephen Dalton taking his place.



## All power to the carriers

THE latest piece in the gigantic future carrier jigsaw has slotted into place with a £235m deal clinched to power the leviathans.

HM Ships Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales, replacements for Britain's existing Invincible-class carriers, will be the largest warships in the world propelled through the seven seas by electric engines.

To drive the two 65,000-tonnes vessels at maximum speeds in excess of 25kts demands state-of-the-art machinery and engineering.

To that end, four international firms – Rolls-Royce, Thales, L3 and Converteam – will work hand-in-hand to provide the engines, rudders, stabilisers, propellers and control systems, with four fifths of the work carried out in the UK.

Two gas turbines will power two electric motors in each vessel, driving two propellers which will each be more than one and a half times the height of a double-decker bus – and weigh more than twice as much.

Beyond driving the ships, the power plants in both vessels will meet all the needs of the ship's companies, generating enough electricity to power a town the size of Swindon (pop.155,000).

Automation, cameras and other monitoring systems mean that despite the ships being three times the size, the marine engineering departments of both carriers will be around 120 sailors strong – roughly the equivalent of today's vessels.

Technological improvements since the existing fleet of flat-tops was laid down in the 1970s also means that on roughly the same amount of fuel, Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales should be able to sail around twice as far.

"The new carriers represent a series of firsts for the Fleet – this propulsion technology has not been seen in the Royal Navy on this scale," said Rear Admiral Bob Love, Director General Ships.

"It is state-of-the-art and it will mean that we will have to learn to do things differently – these are extremely complex systems."

The sisters will be the largest vessels built for the Royal Navy.

The power plants for Queen Elizabeth will be delivered between 2009 and 2011. The ship herself enters service in 2014.

## Cornwall, the 'burger kings

HMS Cornwall headed up the Elbe for a week representing the best of British industry.

The Type 22 frigate spent a week in Hamburg showcasing the RN, British defence firms and the maritime sector as a whole at the (deep breath) International Shipbuilding, Machinery and Marine Technology International Trade Fair.

Although Cornwall herself was a static display, her sailors were not: they toured the sprawling exhibition site, attending lectures and giving various presentations on the role of the RN and the importance of the sea to the nation.

They had a rather large audience: the trade fair attracted some 500 exhibitors from across the globe and upwards of 50,000 visitors.

The trip to Hamburg opened a five-week 'mini deployment' for the frigate.

From the Elbe, she headed for north-west Scotland as one of more than 30 warships taking part in the Joint Warrior (the latest incarnation of Joint Maritime Course/Neptune Warrior) war games with Allied naval, ground and air forces.



● A piper plays a lament for the Super B as Britain's oldest submarine – flying a 32-yard decommissioning pennant – pays off in Devonport

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Sterratt, FRPU West

# A lament for Superb

THE unusual surroundings of Devonport Naval Base saw the last act in the 32-year career of HMS Superb.

The veteran hunter-killer was paid off to the strains of a lament of a lone piper – a homage to the submarine's Scottish roots.

Superb – or Super B to her men – was based in Faslane, but after hitting an underwater pinnace in the Red Sea she was forced to return to the UK – and headed for Devonport.

The grounding incident provoked headlines and slightly shortened Superb's career. But crew past and present chose to celebrate her achievements – and the unique bond forged between

the hundreds of deeps who have sailed in her.

It had been, CO Lt Cdr John Aitken told his men, "a privilege to serve with you. It has been an honour to have you as shipmates."

"It is with some sadness that we bring an end to the career of a submarine that has given longer service than any other in the Royal Navy and that occupies a fond place in the hearts of all who have served in her."

"HMS Superb has been a treasure and a pleasure to serve in."

The boat trailed a



decommissioning pennant more than 30 yards long (one yard for each year of service) while the Band of HM Royal Marines provided suitable accompaniment.

The boat's sponsor, Lady Williams who launched Superb in Barrow on an autumn day in 1974, inspected a ceremonial guard with former CO Cdre Simon Williams.

The world has changed substantially since that day 34 years ago: Superb was built to deal with the threat of Soviet submarines in the North Atlantic.

Once the Soviet threat disappeared in the early 90s,

Superb found a new role – including launching Tomahawk cruise missiles against targets in Afghanistan during the 2001 campaign to oust the Taleban.

"This is an emotional moment for us," said Lt Duncan McClement, Superb's deputy marine engineering officer.

"As we looked after HMS Superb when she was alongside in the docks, so she looked after us when we went to sea in her, sailing nearly half a million miles, serving the nation for more than 30 years."

Just one of the Swiftsure class of boats remains in service now, HMS Sceptre, which is due to pay off in two years... by which time her successor HMS Astute will be active.

# ...and farewell to the Heron

IT'S farewell to one branch of fixed-wing aviation in the RN with the passing of Heron Flight – the operational support and communications unit.

Three Jetstream T3 propeller-driven aircraft have been the most recent incarnation of the Yeovilton-based flight, which traces its history back more than six decades.

The Jetstreams transported thousands of sailors, marines, VIPs and other passengers around the UK and Europe in support of exercises and deployments, as well as providing crucial logistical support to front-line ops around the continent.

To that end, the flight's last year proved to be its busiest. The aircraft were in the skies for 1,200 hours, safely carrying in excess of 3,000 passengers to destinations as far away as Cyprus, Bardufoss in northern Norway and North Africa.

Its final task, before paying off at its home

base, was to provide vital support to its fellow Yeovilton unit, 815 NAS, when one of its Lynx came down in northern Denmark.

The flight's origins date back to 781 and 782 NAS, based at Lee and Donibristle respectively during WW2, and an assortment of Expeditors, Oxfords, Harrows and Travellers.

Heron Flight itself was born in 1981 when 781 NAS and RNAS Yeovilton's Station Flight were disbanded. It proved essential 12 months later in giving logistical support to the forces liberating the Falklands.

When its Sea Devons and Sea Herons were paid off in 1987, the flight disappeared from the scene... until it re-emerged in 1990 with the Jetstreams, actually bought to provide observer training. They proved unsuitable in that role... but very successful as communications aircraft.

In recent years, just a handful of RN personnel have been attached to the unit, with military support firm Serco providing the air and ground crew, and serving RN pilots as the flight and deputy flight commanders.

Fully-laden with 16 passengers, the Jetstreams can fly about 400 nautical miles, or with ten passengers they can extend their range to 1,200 miles. The aircraft have now gone into storage at RAF Cranwell where they await disposal.

Whitehall reckons it can save more than £500,000 each year by axing the flight, with personnel using civilian airlines instead to move around.



Picture: PO(Phot) Brad Bradbury

## Rock rescue for SPAG

WEATHER on The Rock hasn't been all bad this autumn (*see previous page*) – it was ideal for the RN's specialist submarine rescue team.

SPAG (Submarine Parachute Assistance Group) headed to Gibraltar to make use of its (normally) warm and calm waters and practise the art of caring for casualties from a stricken boat.

As the name implies, the SPAG team parachutes over the site of a 'subsmash' to offer immediate assistance to those trapped below.

The parachutists did the 'P' bit last year in Australia at a major exercise.

The emphasis off Gib was the 'A' bit: 40 specialists, including three doctors, four medics and experts from the Submarine Escape Training Tank in Gosport, set up a floating 'casualty centre'.

Using a 'floating village' of 25-man life rafts, they conducted triage – deciding which casualties needed treatment first – and then provided medical aid.

'Casualties' came courtesy of local forces, led by the most senior officer in Gibraltar, Cdre Matt Parr (a former submarine CO).

Whilst the medics were grappling with their makeshift first-aid 'centre', the SPAG bosses were setting up a command and control centre afloat, liaising with the UK.

"As long as we are sending people to sea in submarines and fitting boats with escape hatches, then we need a system to retrieve people from the water and take them to a safe environment," explained Cdr Charlie Neve, SPAG's head.

"Gibraltar is ideal for this kind of training – the weather is generally good, the water temperature is spot on, we get away from our home base for team building and there's a military HQ close at hand."

The team is now back in Blighty, where it remains at six hours notice to move if there's a submarine accident.

## G, it's cold for a swim

THERE are stretches of ocean where you might expect the pipe 'Hands to Bathe'.

Somewhere along the Equator, the Caribbean Sea perhaps, maybe around Hawaii.

The North Sea in autumn is, to be honest, not the immediate choice.

But that didn't deter the men of the Fighting G – especially when British honour was at stake.

And so they stripped off and jumped into the less-than-warm waters of the North Sea in the Danish port of Aalborg for a mini Olympiad, one of the fun precursor events to Danex08 – the annual international war games organised by those bacon and pastry-loving types in Jutland.

The two-week-long exercise is intended to test Allied navies in the art of anti-air, anti-submarine and – increasingly – anti-terrorist defence.

HMS Gloucester, which has recently emerged from refit and passed her Operational Sea Training, arrived in the Danish port to join Allied vessels from Poland, the Netherlands and Germany, plus fellow Pompey native HMS Richmond.

After the Olympiad (rowing and tug-of-war were the other events besides the dip in the harbour), the force put to sea which meant defence watches and action stations for the ships' companies, air attack from Hawk jets and search of the 'suspicious' German tanker Ammersee for Gloucester's boarding party.

The Germans obviously didn't mind the Fighting G's sailors boarding their ship, searching from tip to toe for contraband and interrogating them... because they then pumped lots of lovely oil into Gloucester's tanks during a replenishment at sea.



## Djibouti calls for 'land

THE most notorious waters on the planet are currently the domain of HMS Northumberland, patrolling 'Pirate alley' and the sea off the eastern seaboard of Africa.

The Type 23 is on the first leg of an extremely varied winter deployment (she'll visit the Falklands and the Pacific before eventually returning to Blighty in 2009).

And that deployment has opened in the Red Sea-Horn of Africa region, with the eyes of shipping companies firmly fixed on the ongoing problem of Somali pirates – as you might have read in the national media.

Before beginning her security patrol in earnest, the Devonport-based frigate headed to Djibouti for supplies; the port is one of the key inlets – and outlets – for trade in eastern Africa, especially the landlocked nations.

It is also "an interesting place to do business," Northumberland's CO Cdr Martin Simpson explained. "The logistics officer soon became familiar with the phrase TIA – This Is Africa – to explain the ever-changing timescales and disappearing (and reappearing) facilities and stores."

Upon leaving Djibouti, the warship topped up with fuel from a US tanker then knuckled down to her mission alongside other Allied warships: deterring and disrupting *all* illegal activity on the high seas – drug smuggling and people trafficking are every bit as important as piracy, if not as widely covered by the media.

"There has been much – generally inaccurate – speculation about us in the UK press, we continue our patrol in the hope of providing much-needed stability," said Cdr Simpson.

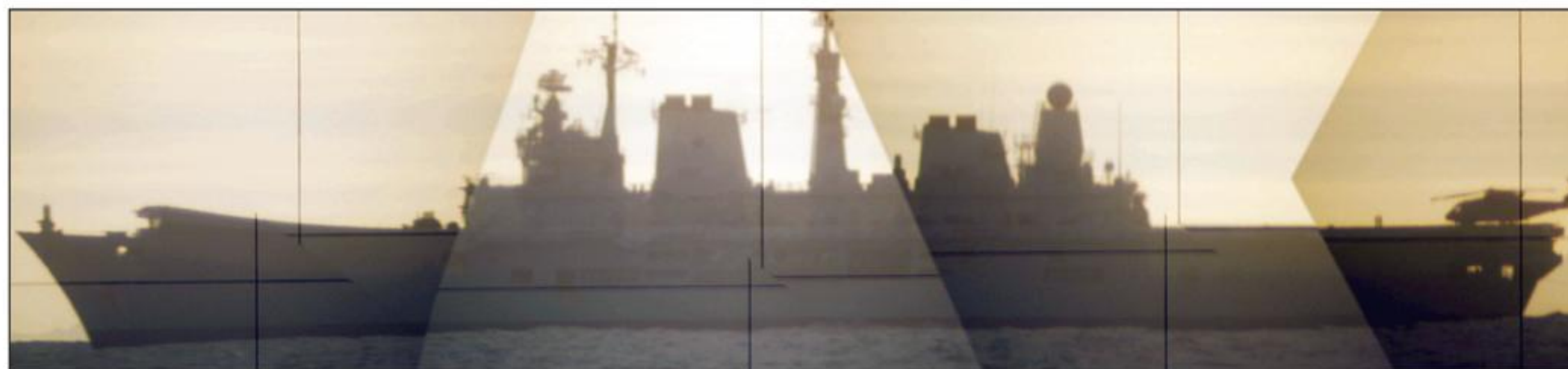
"If current levels of piracy continue, then ultimate prices in the UK – and around the world – will rise to pay for it, and that can be ill afforded at this time."

Also ill-afforded was the ship's water plants packing up in the Red Sea (until the marine engineering department fixed them).

"The ship's company were reduced to the 'submariner shower' rule: ten seconds of water, then off tap, soap up, 30 seconds of water to soap off, end of shower," Cdr Simpson said.

"Feel free to try this at home and watch your water bills plummet!"

And finally... Apologies to Northumberland, but your name won't squeeze into a headline unless the font is really, really small.



● In the line of fire... HMS Ark Royal as seen through a composite periscope photograph captured by HMS Talent's award-winning team

# Talent reaps rewards

**NO vessel in the Senior Service pushed the limits in the past 12 months more than HMS Talent.**

And so it was that men of Talent earned the coveted award for broadening the RN's understanding of modern warfare – and the technology behind it.

Her impressive year began with a Submarine Command Course (better known as Perisher), testing not merely the mettle of budding nuclear boat commanders, but also testing digital cameras for her periscope.

Team Talent found some flaws with the new camera system, offered advice and feedback to the experts and, as a result, led to better periscope photography throughout the entire Silent Service.

She wasn't done there, however. After Perisher came a deployment east of Suez – the first time a submarine fitted with Sonar 2076 had headed that way.

The sonar is fitted to some T-boats and all the Astute class and allows submariners to track potential targets at even greater ranges.

The sonar operators on Talent provided hour after hour of recordings from 2076 to allow scientists and experts back home to better understand the relatively-new system, while their shipmates provided every possible tactical opportunity to test the sonar to its limits.



The end result is that the manual for the sonar's use will be far more comprehensive and accurate.

And the net result from all of Talent's activities, said the RN's Commander Operations Rear Admiral David Cooke, was that the boat had "set a standard in tactical support which is beyond that experienced from a submarine-sized unit in any one calendar year."

He continued: "Many programmes have been as varied and busy as Talent's, but few have produced the tangible contributions to tactical development that have had such a direct impact on front-

line operation capability."

That earned the submarine the MBDA Trophy for Warfare Development – sponsored by the defence firm of the same name.

Rear Admiral Cooke presented the trophy with Capt Rupert Best, director of the Maritime Warfare Centre, and representatives of MBDA to Talent's CO Cdr David Lightfoot aboard the boat in Devonport.

"The crew embraced the changes and, as a result, have made a real difference in the way we and the Royal Navy operate," Cdr Lightfoot added.

"To stay at the forefront of maritime warfare we must develop, trial and exploit the latest technology. The importance of conducting trials cannot be understated."



## Plume with a view

A GIANT plume of water (pictured above, just in case you were wondering) signalled the end of one of the Germans' biggest wartime weapons unearthed after more than six decades.

A fishing boat snared the 1,800lb 'GC' mine off the coast of Sheerness while trawling – and immediately called for the assistance of the Royal Navy.

Enter a four-man team from Southern Diving Unit 2 on Horsea Island near Portsmouth. They inspected the aging explosive before carrying it safely to an area off the North Kent coast.

There it was lowered 30ft to the seabed, a mile-radius exclusion zone was declared and the team blew the device up – sending an enormous shaft of water rising into the autumnal sky.

"These mines were the biggest the Germans made – they were designed to destroy ships the size of aircraft carriers and caused severe damage to British ships during the war," explained CPO(D) Sid Lawrence.

"They were very well-made devices – you don't see many of them left because most of them went off. This one probably survived so long because it remained in shallow waters all these years."

Apart from the fishing vessel which originally trawled the device, the mine was exploded without any disruption to shipping in the Thames Estuary.

## ...as does Brocklesby/Chiddingfold

**TIS' the season to win awards. For it is not only HMS Talent which is at the cutting edge of warfare beneath the sea – so too is HMS Brocklesby.**

The minehunter snapped up two mine warfare trophies thanks to the efforts of her ship's company... while they were in their sister vessel.

Until a few weeks ago, Team Brocklesby were Team Chiddingfold – enjoying the delights of the Gulf.

And it is for their efforts aboard the 'Cheery Chid' that the sailors – officially MCM2 Crew 2 – earned plaudits.

Chiddingfold was the first Hunt-class ship to receive Seafox, the successor to the 'yellow submarines' used by Britain's mine countermeasures forces to deal with underwater devices.

Having trialed the underwater device during a Neptune Warrior war game in Scottish waters, and extensive tests in less-than-charitable autumnal weather at the Butec ranges off the Isle of Skye, Chiddingfold then took Seafox down to Gib to conduct the weapon's very first live firing on a practice mine.

That honour fell to PO(MW) Anthony 'Pinta' Beer, the driver (aka underwater pilot) of Seafox. "I was very proud to be involved with the first live firing after all the hard work and the long hours the ship's company spent bringing Seafox into service," said the senior rate.

And it was Pinta who received a presentation by Ultra Electronics,

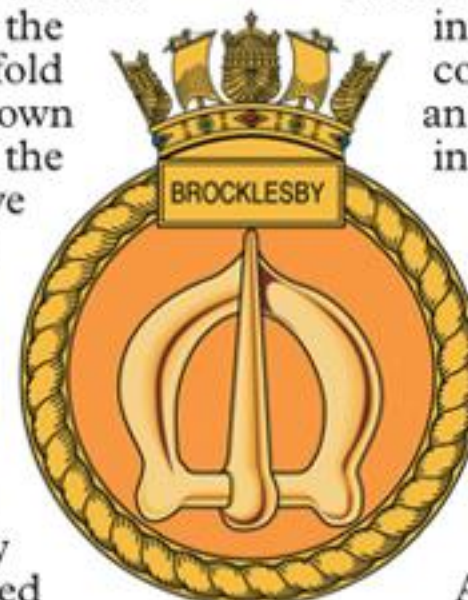
the firm behind Seafox – a presentation which coincided with an even more prestigious award.

The James Acton Mine Warfare Efficiency Trophy – named in honour of a lieutenant commander killed by an earthquake in Turkey in 1999 – perpetuates the officer's name and his dedication to the branch of the Service he loved.

It was a benchmark which Chiddingfold lived up to when she reached the Gulf in company with HMS Asterstone last spring.

The crux of their mission was to eliminate long-standing 'mine danger areas' at the tip of the Gulf, thus freeing up nautical trade.

During that mission, the ship's company identified more than



360 contacts thanks to their Sonar 2193, sent Seafox out on ten runs and the dive team out on 30 occasions.

The task reached its climax in the particularly challenging waters of the Khawr Abd Allah – the waterway which leads to Iraq's principal port, Umm Qasr.

The sailors carried out three comprehensive searches of the allotted waters, and the divers worked in difficult waters to confirm by touch that five suspicious contacts on sonar were not historic ordnance.

As part of the rotation of Hunt crews, Chiddingfold's sailors handed over their ship during the summer to another MCM2 team and returned to Portsmouth to take charge of HMS Brocklesby – which they're still aboard.

And it was in Portsmouth that Rear Admiral Surface Ships, Rear Admiral Philip Wilcocks, presented the trophy to Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Tom Tredray.

"It is recognition of the hard work and professionalism that has been shown by all on board during a very successful year," said a proud Lt Cdr Tredray.

## A time to be Vigilant

THE Vigilant era has begun in Devonport with the arrival of the bomber for a three-year overhaul.

The nuclear missile submarine has been in service for a dozen years and needs a major revamp as well as a reactor refuel to keep her on active duties beyond 2020.

The team at Babcock in Devonport have only recently finished doing exactly the same job on her older sister Victorious (she departed in July after £270m of work). When the work reaches its peak, it will keep around 1,500 people employed.

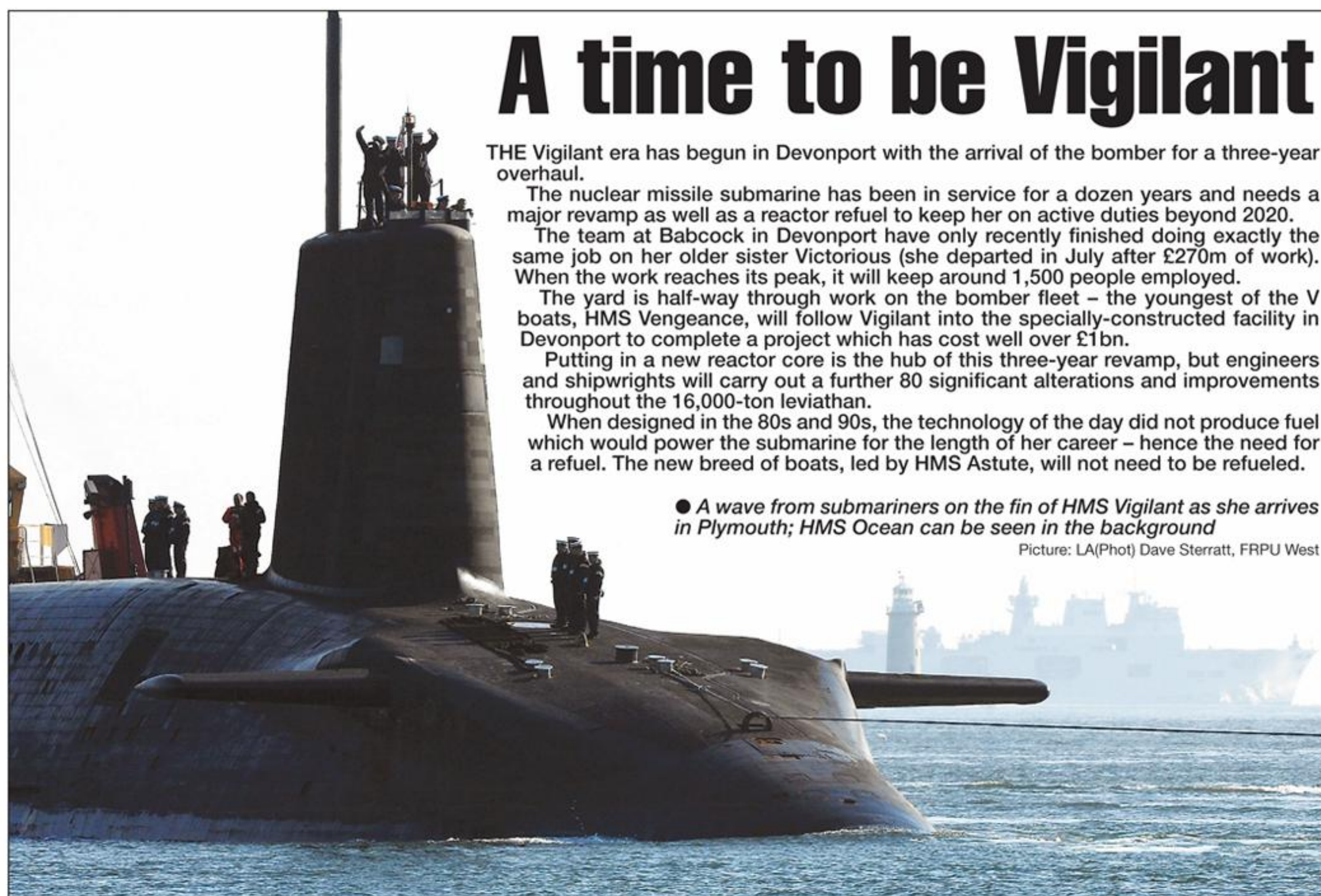
The yard is half-way through work on the bomber fleet – the youngest of the V boats, HMS Vengeance, will follow Vigilant into the specially-constructed facility in Devonport to complete a project which has cost well over £1bn.

Putting in a new reactor core is the hub of this three-year revamp, but engineers and shipwrights will carry out a further 80 significant alterations and improvements throughout the 16,000-ton leviathan.

When designed in the 80s and 90s, the technology of the day did not produce fuel which would power the submarine for the length of her career – hence the need for a refuel. The new breed of boats, led by HMS Astute, will not need to be refueled.

● A wave from submariners on the fin of HMS Vigilant as she arrives in Plymouth; HMS Ocean can be seen in the background

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Sterratt, FRPU West



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# Best laid PLA(N)s



● All that glitters... HMS Kent at a buoy in Hong Kong harbour and (below) Lynx pilot Lt Jonny Stanton prepares to lift off for a "crash on deck" exercise

● The destroyer Qingdao – with the First Sea Lord aboard – leads HMS Kent on a search and rescue exercise



## QUESTION: what sport should a group of sailors take part in at the home of Olympic sailing?

Yes, that's right: the answer is, of course, tug-of-war.

The Chinese city of Qingdao – where rower Lt Peter Reed grabbed gold just a couple of months ago – witnessed a rather less-publicised sporting event as HMS Kent grappled with their counterparts from the People's Liberation Army (Navy).

The heave-ho (won by the Brits, we might add) was one of the lighter moments during a pretty hectic week in Qingdao (350 miles southwest of the Chinese capital) aimed at fostering Anglo-Sino relations.

Sport is obviously one excellent way of doing that (as the recent Olympiad admirably demonstrated).

Another way is setting fire to your ship.

For as you do when you're visiting a foreign navy, you show each other your nozzles, hoses, and hydrants.

The men (and women) of Kent sent smoke billowing through their frigate, donned farnought suits and promptly demonstrated to their Chinese hosts how to re-take a fire-infested compartment.

And the Chinese went one better. They started a fire on a flight deck. Luckily, they put it out again.

After defeat in the tug-of-war, the PLA(N) evened honours on the football pitch in front of quite possibly the most smartly attired (white tropical uniforms) and most polite (magnanimously applauding while sitting down) crowd in any stadium. The Chinese ran out 4-3 winners, for the record.

Kent's stay in Qingdao concluded with a visit by First Sea Lord Admiral Jonathon Band (who was visiting China on a wide-ranging military tour).

After being guest of honour at an evening reception aboard the frigate, he watched Kent and the PLA(N) destroyer Qingdao carry out a (mock) search and rescue mission... from aboard the Chinese vessel.

Rescue done, the ship's company manned Kent's upper decks in their tropical uniforms to 'cheer ship' and bid farewell to their admiral – and the Chinese.

Qingdao was the second Chinese port of call for Kent, which is now in the latter stages of her six-month Volans (Far East) deployment.

After a magical visit to Tokyo (featured in last month's paper), the frigate enjoyed echoes of Empire in Hong Kong.

The stay in the former colony was a rather less formal affair than the week in Qingdao.

Indeed, many of Kent's loved ones flew out to be with their other halves – the first time in most cases that they'd seen them since the warship passed Round Tower in the summer.

There was a smattering of official

engagements, ship's tours, and sporting events.

Hong Kong proved particularly profitable for LET(ME) Lee 'Jessie' Owen who bagged a free holiday thanks to Kent's visit.

The leading hand pines for his native Coventry whenever he's deployed, so his friends keep him up to date by posting the city's newspaper, the *Coventry Telegraph*, every week.

And what better place to read it than astride Kent's 4.5in gun in the middle of Hong Kong harbour? (*His mess? – Ed*)

The 'historic' moment was captured by LA(Phot) Owen King (see page 20 for the result...we ran out of space here) and 'pinged' (technical term – *Ed*) back to the newsroom, where bosses named it winner of a competition to find the best/most unusual location for a read of their journal – and gave the sailor a free four-day holiday (in Blighty, sadly, not Hong Kong).

Rather more humbling was a visit by the ship's company to the Cross Roads charity at Tuen Men.

A team of volunteers from Kent, er, volunteered to install audio-visual equipment in a 'life experience' room designed to educate people and businesses on the true effects of poverty and the impact of living with diseases and disabilities.

In particular, the team helped to create a new room designed to highlight the impact of blindness, such as that caused by river blindness in Africa.

"It was a fascinating and sobering opportunity to see the efforts of Cross Roads and the effectiveness of the life experience rooms in educating others," said Lt Adrian Botham.

The eastern odyssey isn't quite over for Kent. She's currently in Singapore having represented Britain in the annual Commonwealth war games Bersama Lima.

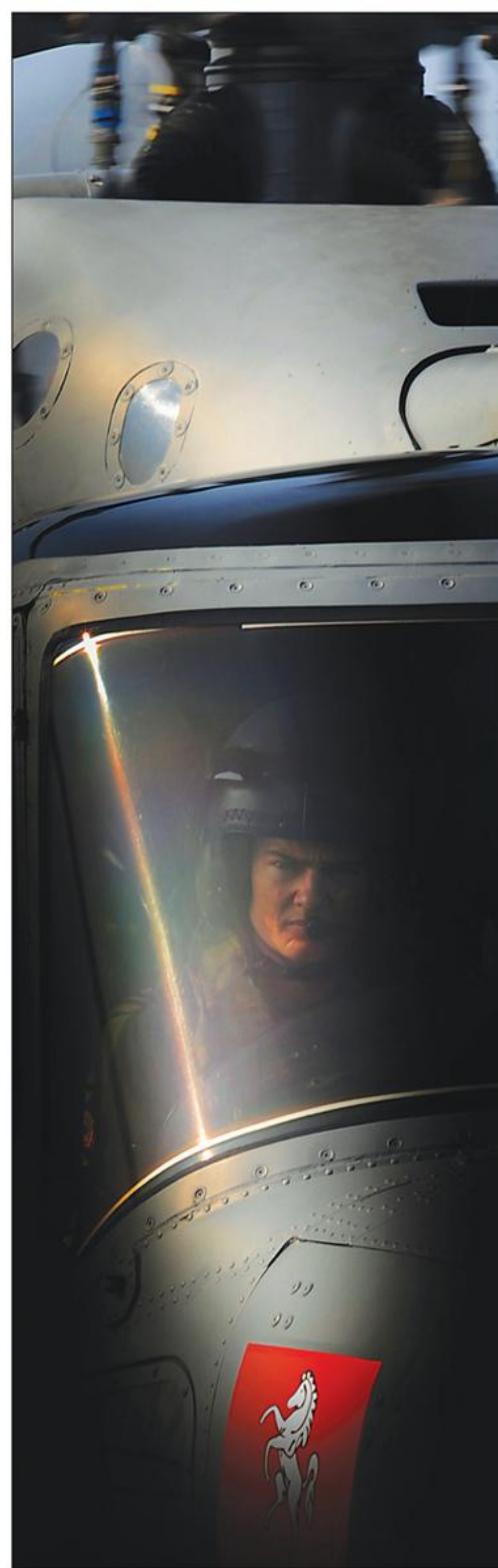
Four decades ago, with the Empire on the wane east of Suez, five powers – UK, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia – banded together to vow to defend the region should the need ever arise.

And to that end, the naval, air and ground forces from the quintet exercise at least once every year.

Bonding between five scattered nations isn't always easy, so rather than simply throw participants into the war games, organisers laid on a series of 'getting to know you' events.

The Perth Cup is a mini Olympiad – handball, volleyball, football, biathlon and rugby among other disciplines. The banyan is a 'nosh fest' – with each participant invited to produce a national dish and stage some cultural performance which reflects their heritage.

With Bersama Lima now done, Kent is about to head west, first for Sri Lanka, then for security patrols in the Indian Ocean. The ship returns to Portsmouth just before Christmas.



● A stunning panorama of Hong Kong harbour as seen from Kent's forecandle







# Lusty hosts Air Force 1

RACING low over the Irish Sea, two Harriers of RAF 1 Squadron head into the sunset – before returning to HMS Illustrious.

The jets of Joint Force Harrier, based at RAF Cottesmore, joined the aircraft carrier for a mix of at-sea training and the latest Joint Warrior exercise (formerly Neptune Warrior and before that Joint Maritime Course).

With the Naval Strike Wing committed to supporting Allied forces in Afghanistan, it's down to the Air Force to deliver the punch from Britain's strike carrier.

Illustrious will lead a major amphibious task group to the Mediterranean in the new year –

Exercise Taurus 09 – so it was vital her flight deck team worked up with an air group (Sea King airborne surveillance and control helicopters from 857 NAS were also aboard).

"The skills and type of training required for our operational role in Afghanistan are different from the skills and training required for our maritime strike role," explained Cdr Adrian Orchard, Deputy Force Commander of Joint Force Harrier.

"During the last five years, we've been rightly focused on operations in Afghanistan, but by taking part in Joint Warrior we can fully integrate our pilots and develop their skills – and the ship's – to conduct maritime strike operations."

Lusty arrived in Scottish waters for the international war games (we'll have a more

comprehensive report next month) fresh from several weeks of Operational Sea Training under the team at FOST – her second major examination by the Devonport organisation in 2008.

Her first (rather fraught) test at the beginning of the year was captured on camera by the documentary team producing *Warship*. Her second wasn't recorded or quite so fraught, but it was a relief to come through.

"OST was challenging – and difficult at times," said PO(MEA) Tom Burnham. "It's a relief to finish."

CO Capt Steve Chick said his 600-plus men and women richly deserved their endorsement from the FOSTies.

"The training provided by FOST is second

to none – they assess ships to the highest standards," he added.

"To leave with a 'sound satisfactory' assessment is a real achievement and demonstrates the professionalism of the crew and their ability to work as a team."

There's little break for the Portsmouth carrier post-Joint Warrior. The ship will be in London, her affiliated city, between November 4 and 12, mooring in the Thames at Greenwich for the duration of her stay.

Although the ship won't be open to visitors, sailors will be participating in the Lord Mayor's Show on Saturday November 8 and 50 of the ship's company will attend the Remembrance Sunday service at St Paul's Cathedral the following day.

New Saab 9-3 Saloon range: Urban – from 16.7 (16.9) to 39.2 (7.2), Extra-urban – from 39.2 (7.2) to 64.2 (4.4), Combined – from 26.2 (10.8) to 52.3 (5.4). CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions from 147 to 259g/km. New Saab 9-3 Convertible range: Urban – from 16.3 (17.3) to 36.7 (7.7), Extra-urban – from 36.7 (7.7) to 60.1 (4.7), Combined – from 25.4 (11.1) to 48.7 (5.8). CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions from 154 to 266g/km.

Model shown is Saloon Aero 1.9TTiD OTR £26,470 with optional ALU73 18" 10 spoke alloy wheels at £800. Military discounts are available to all serving members of UK Armed Forces, retired service personnel, MOD civilian personnel and HM Forces Reservists. The offer is also extended to the spouse/partner of the eligible applicant. No other marketing programmes apply. \* New 9-3 Convertible Aero 1.9TTiD (180PS) auto.

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# Tours in Torbay

EVEN at the weekend in the English Riviera, there's no escaping those lovely people from FOST.

Frigate HMS Portland has been put through the rigours of Operational Sea Training this autumn, and brought the curtain down on her second phase of OST with a weekend anchored in Torbay.

Very nice. Except that this wasn't some holiday. No, the entire stay in the bay was monitored by the FOSTies, who assess a ship's ability to undertake civic and diplomatic commitments – important functions both at home and abroad.

After arriving at lunchtime on Friday, Portland was immediately ready to welcome more than 85 college and university students and show them what the Type 23 is capable of.

The demonstration was based on a scenario whereby the frigate had just been tasked to conduct boarding and search operations on a nearby vessel.

Guests were shown the boats which are used to get to the vessel, the weapons carried by the Royal Marines and the actions by the frigate's Lynx.

They were then taken around the ship and shown the bridge, operations room and finally the ship control centre (SCC) where all the propulsion, generation and domestic services are controlled.

They were also able to watch fire-fighting, flooding and damage control exercises.

The students filed off suitably imbued with a taste of Portland... and were quickly followed by 120 dignitaries coming on board for an official reception and traditional ceremonial sunset.

Saturday was another busy day with scores of local schoolchildren and Sea Cadets given tours of the frigate... and the latter enjoyed some impromptu parade training on the flight deck under the direction of LS Walmsley.

On the final day of the visit before resuming her Sea Training, Portland opened to the general public.

As she was at anchor, it meant numbers were limited to 600 (all tickets from the local tourist information centre were hurriedly snapped up) as they had to be ferried out to warship.

The traffic wasn't all one way.

Every member of the ship's company enjoyed a run ashore, and many sailors took advantage of free hot air balloon rides on the seafloor, allowing them to enjoy the spectacular sights of Torbay from 400 feet in the air – in true English Riviera weather.

The weekend was particularly special for AB Natasha Ellis, who hails from Paignton, and was delighted to show her friends and family – including her two younger sisters who are members of the local Sea Cadets – around her ship.

● Waves batter the shattered hull of the Fedra the day after the dramatic rescue at Europa Point

Picture: Johnny Bugeja, Gibraltar Chronicle



## Rock rescue on The Rock

QUIZ night on the Rock turned into international rescue night on the Rock when storms smashed a merchantman into Europa Point.

Cargo ship MV Fedra was bashed against the rocks beneath the lighthouse which marks the southernmost tip of Gibraltar during a Force 12 tempest.

The result was a heart-stopping, improvised but ultimately successful mission to pluck 31 mariners to safety.

The Fedra had been trying to ride out the storm east of the colony – only for her anchor to drag.

Despite the best efforts of the MOD tug Capable – which normally helps RN vessels into and out of harbour – Nature proved too potent and Fedra eventually ran aground on the rocks at Europa Point...

... just about the time that CPO 'Fez' Parker was compering quiz night at the NAAFI Lion Bar.

All thoughts of questions and prizes were put aside: the Servicemen rushed out into the elements to help.

A Spanish Coast Guard helicopter managed to winch some of the Fedra's crew off – until a wave broke over the cab, causing an engine flame out which led to the aircraft setting down on the Europa Flats.

The only choice now was to rig a breeches buoy – something Gib's fire brigade accomplished, but they needed extra manpower on the lines.

Which is where the quizgoers – most dressed for a night on the town rather than a night exposed to the elements – come in.

The response when the emergency call came

in, said Fez, was "fantastic – at least 60 men and women went down there just dressed in whatever they were wearing".

One of those who volunteered was WO1 Dermot Brennan.

"Some of the guys had spent over two hours working in Storm Force 10 just wearing jeans, a T-shirt and flip-flops," he said.

"We were soaked to the skin, but it was worth it."

By midnight, the makeshift rescue mission was over – shortly before the storm broke MV Fedra in two.

"The willingness of those called out from the Lion Bar to man the breeches buoy ropes in appalling conditions contributed to the rescue of very scared Filipino crew," said Lt Cdr Nick Chapman who helped to co-ordinate the military response to the accident.



● The Red Arrows trail red, white and blue smoke over Bournemouth – and over an armada of small vessels, and one rather large one, RFA Mounts Bay

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## The Bourne (air) supremacy

HOT on the heels of her appearance at Fowey Regatta, the unmistakable outline of landing support ship RFA Mounts Bay could be seen further east.

The auxiliary 'docked down' off Bournemouth beach for the town's air festival.

For despite the title, this wasn't purely a celebration of machines which defy gravity.

In fact, 1,200 visitors were ferried out to the 16,000-tonne support ship – she can deliver 350

troops and their military kit on to hostile (or benign) shores – for guided tours.

A further 750,000 people watched the air displays which, aside from the Crabs, also featured the RN's Lynx helicopter display team, the Black Cats, performing their aerobatic routines in the Dorset skies.

Post-Bournemouth, Mounts Bay has been exercising with much of the Fleet on the Joint Warrior war game in north-west Scotland.

## Stimulation from simulation

TWO of the RN's most senior warfare officers headed across the Pond to see what we can learn from the Americans' use of technology to train sailors.

Cdre Steve Kirby, CO of the Maritime Warfare School, and Cdre Campbell Christie, Assistant Chief-of-Staff (Training), spent five days touring US Navy establishments.

The Americans heavily use simulation and 'synthetic training environments' to educate today's and tomorrow's sailors.

The Battle Force Tactical Trainer allows personnel to fight

a naval 'battle' and can hook up across the Atlantic with the Maritime Warfare School in HMS Collingwood.

It's pretty impressive, but not as impressive as the 'ship in a box' facility run by the Center for Security Forces at Little Creek in Virginia – a highly-realistic board and search trainer complete with special sound and smoke effects.

And that in turn is not quite as impressive as Battle Stations 21, a three-quarter scale model of an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer at Recruit Training Command at Great Lakes – the US Navy's

counterpart of HMS Raleigh.

Battle Stations 21 uses Hollywood-style special effects to pose real-life challenges for trainees, including the terrorist attack on USS Cole in 2000, mine damage to USS Tripoli during Desert Storm in 1990 and the missile strike on USS Stark in the Gulf back in 1987, as well as fires and floods.

More than 40,000 US sailors undergo basic training at the 'boot camp' each year.

Cdre Christie was the reviewing officer as 950 recruits graduated in front of 3,500 guests.



● Helmand's kitchen... Sgt Neil 'Face' Potter toils in the galley of 45 Commando's FOB Sangin



IN THE second of an occasional series on the myriad jobs in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, we look at the chefs (yes, that's right, they're still chefs) of 45 Commando slaving away in Helmand

WITH life in the Forward Operating Base (FOB) dependent on resupply from air and vehicle assets, it is easy to feel isolated in the vast expanses of the desert.

To sustain operations continually requires hard work from the logistics command but to sustain morale continually requires a little bit of culinary imagination from the resident frontline chefs.

The average bootneck appetite has already passed into military folklore.

Now add to that the high calorie intake the men need to operate in high temperatures laden with heavy kit (typically over 50lbs) with only the option of ten-man ration packs and you begin to appreciate the difficulty chefs come up against.

One particular culinary magician is Sgt Neil 'Face' Potter of 45 Commando Royal Marines who heads a four-man team feeding anything up to 500 officers and men three meals every day in the searing heat of Helmand.

The last place anyone wants to be in the energy-sapping dust and heat is the galley of FOB Sangin, the hub of 45's operations in southern Afghanistan.

"The most challenging thing is creating a variety of meals from a ten-man ration pack that only has four variants," explained Sgt Potter.

His team is constantly on the lookout for different foods to add to the menu.

Flight dependent, fresh rations arrive in Sangin at the moment twice a month, and the favourite dish amongst the men is either curry or beef Wellington.

US rations are also used to add variety with macaroni cheese being popular. Several cakes and sweets to add to the 'luxury'.

Working temperatures can reach 32°C (90°F) degrees on a regular basis but with winter approaching, mornings and evenings are becoming quite cool – outside the galley that is.

Afghan Locally Employed Contractors (LECs) assist around the galley area, washing pots and cleaning the general area which has proved to be a great help.

As for the lads, they have to fight the internal hygiene battle with a constant cleaning regime.

Not only does this combat the ever-present dust, but also helps stave off the constant threat of sicknesses like diarrhoea and vomiting.

Covering all food to keep off insects and the use of hand-washing stations helps to control illness within a densely inhabited area.

Words and picture: LA(Phot)

Nick Tryon, 45 Cdo

3 Commando Brigade in Helmand, pages 14-15



# Register to vote



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Ask your Unit Registration Officer for more information



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# The new avengers

**S**HIP and squadron mottos invariably encapsulate fighting spirit, bravado, boldness.

The watchwords of 820 Naval Air Squadron are no different.

But they neatly sum up the squadron's role past and present: *tutamen et ultor* – safeguard and avenger.

Safeguard: the squadron has been at the forefront of Britain's defence against the submarine threat for more than half a century.

And avenger: twice she meted out severe retribution on an enemy who delivered brutal blows to the Royal Navy.

Today, however, there's more safeguarding than avenging.

Based at RNAS Culdrose and equipped with six Merlin HM Mk1s (although the Mk2 is already looming on the horizon), 820 is one of the triumvirate of front-line Merlin squadrons.

Unlike 829 NAS, 820 is not assigned to specific ships (such as the Type 23 fleet) but deploys with carriers, RFAs, or operates from land bases around the globe...

... as has been demonstrated in the past 12 months: exercises in the North Sea, Baltic, Denmark, and further afield have kept the 120 personnel (30 pilots/observers/aircrewmen and 90 mechanics and technicians) busy.

Most recently, the squadron has been conducting training in home waters, including practising the art of casualty evacuation at sea ('casualties' provided by the ship's company of HMS Portland).

First formed in 1933 when the RAF transferred several Fairey III aircraft from its 405 Flight to the Royal Navy, for two thirds



● An 820 NAS Merlin leaves the rugged Cornish coast behind and heads to pick up a 'casualty' from HMS Portland

Picture: LA(Phot) Carl Osmond, RNAS Culdrose

of its lifespan 820 NAS has been devoted to anti-submarine warfare.

All but one of its dozen battle honours were earned before its fliers became specialists in anti-submarine warfare.

Indeed the first two decades of the squadron's life were as varied as the aircraft with which it was equipped.

Originally attached to HMS Courageous on reconnaissance duties, it was reassigned to HMS

Ark Royal IV which would be its home for much of the great carrier's legendary three-year career.

From Ark Royal – and later Victorious – 820's Swordfish biplanes struck at German-occupied airfields in Norway, the French fleet at Mers el Kebir and, most famously, at the Bismarck (nemesis of the Hood) when the squadron crippled the pride of Hitler's Kriegsmarine.

The Mediterranean theatre

would dominate much of 820's war. Re-equipped with Fairey Albacore torpedo bombers, the squadron supported the Allied landings in North Africa (sinking the U-boat which had destroyed HMS Barham the year before), Sicily and Salerno.

More new aircraft (Fairey Barracudas) and a new target (Tirpitz) followed (the squadron didn't sink the leviathan) before yet another change of weaponry (Grumman Avengers) and a final theatre of war (the Far East) concluded 820's war.

In those final months, her Avengers struck at the oil refineries of Palembang and the heart of the Japanese Empire (Tokyo) before HMS Indefatigable brought the squadron home in 1946 and 820 disbanded.

The squadron re-formed five years later, first with fixed-wing aircraft (Fireflies, Avengers and Gannets) before the decision was taken to convert to helicopters.

It was here, in December 1957, that 820's association with anti-submarine warfare began.

Whirlwinds, Wessexes and Sea



Norway .....	1940-41
Spartivento .....	1940
Bismarck .....	1941
Atlantic .....	1941
Malta Convoys .....	1941
North Africa .....	1942-43
Sicily .....	1943
Salerno .....	1943
Palembang .....	1945
Okinawa .....	1945
Japan .....	1945
Falkland Islands .....	1982

**Aircraft:** Merlin HM Mk1  
**Engines:** 3 x 2,200 shp  
**Rolls-Royce gas turbines**  
**Length:** 22.8m (74ft 10in)  
**Height:** 6.65m (21ft 10in)  
**Rotor span:** 18.59m (61ft)  
**Weight:** 14.6 tonnes (32,000lb)  
**Speed:** 167 knots  
**Crew:** one pilot, one observer, one aircrewman  
**Endurance:** 750 nautical miles  
**Armament:** Up to four Sting Ray torpedoes or depth charges, 2 x GPMG, sniper rifle

Kings formed the cutting edge in the war against the underwater threat.

The squadron's most recent battle honour was earned in the Falklands (its aircrew flew more than 4,700 hours during the campaign to re-take the South Atlantic islands).

820 finally bade farewell to the Sea King in 2003 and welcomed the helicopter which is now the mainstay of Britain's anti-submarine defence.

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## HEROES OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.54

James Hurry, George Bevan, Maurice MacMahon, Edward Richardson, Christopher Watson, James Henry and Malcolm Thompson

THERE was little cause for cheer and little end in sight to Armageddon in the first week of November 1916.

The year 1916 had offered so much hope to the Allied cause: for the first time co-ordinated action by the united nations, the arrival of Kitchener's armies on the Western Front, the clash of dreadnoughts in the North Sea.

Hopes and dreams faded in the mud of the Western Front and murk of the Skagerrak.

The Battle of the Somme still had ten days to run – plenty of time to add a few more hundred names to its butcher's bill of more than a million casualties on both sides.

Verdun, the grimmet of all the grim channell houses of the Great War, would see another six weeks of battle before the Meuse mill ground the last of its 700,000 victims.

The latest battle on the Isonzo (the ninth) had just ended – like the previous eight – without the Italian armies sweeping through the Austria-Hungarian positions in the Alps.

Only the Eastern Front did not sway back and forth with the attack and counter-attack of warring nations.

But the Eastern Front was not at peace. The Tsar's Army had driven the Austro-Hungarians to the foothills of the Carpathians before exhausting itself – only after inflicting one and a half million casualties on its foe.

It wasn't just the Tsar's Army which was exhausted. So too were its supplies. A generation before convoys ferried vital aid from the West to the East to sustain the Russian soldier in his struggle with the Teuton, less-heralded merchantmen braved the waters of northern Europe to deliver war materiel to Russia.

This Wednesday, November 8, the port of Archangel was filled – as ever – with ships being loaded and unloaded, while others waited their turn at anchor of Bakaritsa Island.

In the fading light of a mid-autumn afternoon, the wharves were suddenly rocked by an explosion as the SS Baron Driesen, a weather-worn 15-year-old steamer blew apart while her crew unloaded munitions.

The blast did more than rock the harbour. It spread flames, embers and molten metal around the wharves setting stores and ships alight.

Next to go up in flames was another

merchantman, SS Earl of Forfar, carrying shells and other ammunition.

The wharves of Archangel were emptying as sailors tried to move their endangered ships to safety.

There was no thought of moving the Earl of Forfar. Her stern had already blown up and fires raged on her fore-castle too now.

But above the crackle of bullets 'cooking off' on the quayside and explosions rocking his ship, from the shoreside the Earl of Forfar's captain, James Campbell Hurry, could hear his men groaning, crying for help.

He rounded up a party of volunteers through the flames, lifted several shells off the deck and hauled seven injured men to safety.

Elsewhere on the ship's shattered fore-castle, Lt Cdr Maurice MacMahon and Capt George Bevan RN shifted smouldering debris to lift a mate, his arm, leg and collarbone broken, on to a waiting tug, the Sunderland.

There, Lt Edward Richardson, 2nd Engineer Christopher Watson and ABS James Henry and Malcolm Thompson were showered by burning embers as they carried the Forfar's stricken crew onboard.

Maurice MacMahon was not done yet, however. He rushed over a plank on to a floating crane next to the Earl of Forfar and dragged a carpenter and the crane's two Russian crew to safety.

With that, all who could be saved had been saved – and minutes later the Earl of Forfar was rocked by one final explosion as her deck blew up.

All seven rescuers were gazetted for the Albert Medal the following September.

Each one had displayed "utmost gallantry" and "disregard for personal safety".







● The still is piped as the new headstone honouring Dennis Spicer is dedicated by the ship's company of HMS Iron Duke  
Picture: LA(Phot) Jay Allen, FRPU East

# Frigate's grave responsibility

## ONCE Navy, always Navy.

It is more than just a motto, more than mere slogan, but a common thread running through the history of the Senior Service.

Time and the elements had not been kind to the last resting place of Engineering Mechanic (1st Class) Dennis Spicer of HMS Delight.

The 22-year-old Londoner died in a diving accident while on shore leave from HMS Delight in the British Virgin Islands in 1958.

Five decades later, the men and women of HMS Iron Duke saw to it that the unfortunate sailor's restored headstone was re-dedicated with full honours.

The original stone in the grounds of St George's Church, Tortola, was cracked and weathered, so the Commonwealth War Graves Commission set about replacing it.

Iron Duke's chaplain Rev James Tabor, CO Cdr Mark Newland and three of his company paid tributes to the rating as the replacement stone was dedicated.

"The Navy has a great tradition of looking after its own – even after they have left the Service," said Cdr Newland.

"It is comforting to know that wherever you go in the world the Navy and the camaraderie which it instils in its people links sailors everywhere, past and present.

"It means a great deal, not only to myself and my ship's company, but also to Mr Spicer's family."

Cdr Newland's frigate is in the latter stages of six-month Caribbean deployment aimed at tackling drug runners (two big busts so far), reaffirming bonds with Commonwealth nations and providing assistance to storm ravaged islands (Grand Cayman and the Turks

and Caicos have already benefited from Iron Duke's aid in the aftermath of hurricanes Gustav and Ike).

Although the hurricane season is now on the wane, islands in the region can never let their guard down.

And so it was that emergency services from Anguilla spent a training day aboard the 'Iron Duke'.

The police took part in first aid demonstrations and navigational training; their fire-fighting comrades watched the sailors show how to deal with blazes in the confined spaces of a ship.

It's not all storms and preparing for storms in the Caribbean in the early autumn, thankfully.

St Kitts and Nevis (pop. c.50,000, making it 201st on the list of most/least populated nations) in the Leeward Islands was celebrating a quarter century of independence.

And that proved to be a big thing in the twin-island nation.

The local defence force spent three months preparing for the Independence Day parade. Iron Duke's team had three hours to get ready.

And they did a pretty good job given the timescale. Lt Jason Hannigan led the 18-strong Guard of Honour, with PO Chris Harris carrying the Colour.

Events reached their climax in the Warner Park Stadium in Basseterre, St Kitts' capital, with a parade and formal inspection by the islands' premier Dr Denzil Douglas, and a fly past by Iron Duke's Lynx.

Warner Park is also home to football and cricket (it was one of the venues for the 2007 cricket World Cup) – and the 'Iron Duke's' sporting teams were in action taking on local opposition, while their shipmates knuckled down to some community work.



## 824 enjoy the 'rush hours

ROTTEN weather has rather plagued airshows and the RN's involvement in them this year. But not in Northern Ireland.

After Southend (wet, overcast), Fairford (washed out), Waddington (mixed), the fliers of 824 NAS finally had glorious skies to perform in at Portrush Airshow.

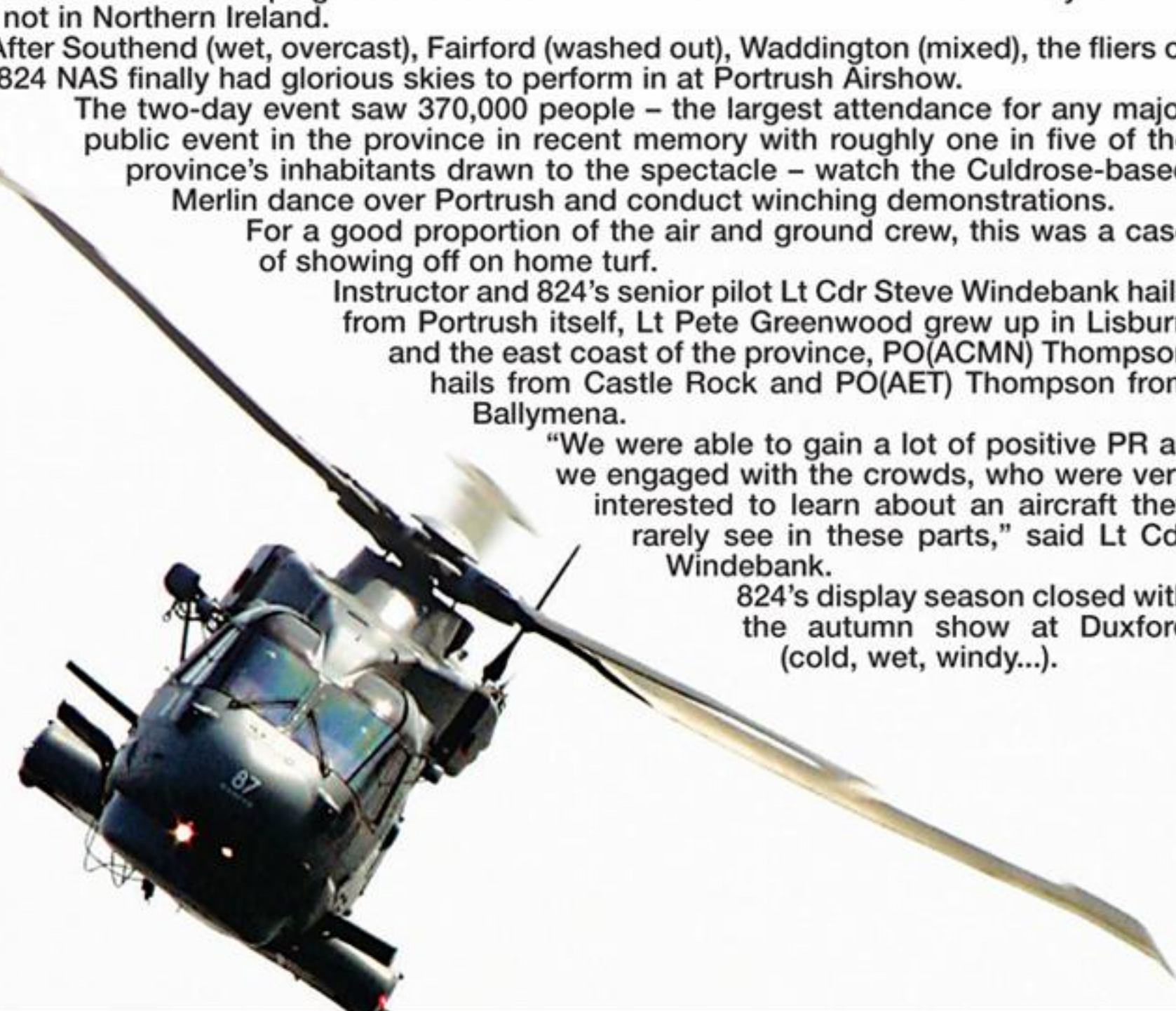
The two-day event saw 370,000 people – the largest attendance for any major public event in the province in recent memory with roughly one in five of the province's inhabitants drawn to the spectacle – watch the Culdrose-based Merlin dance over Portrush and conduct winching demonstrations.

For a good proportion of the air and ground crew, this was a case of showing off on home turf.

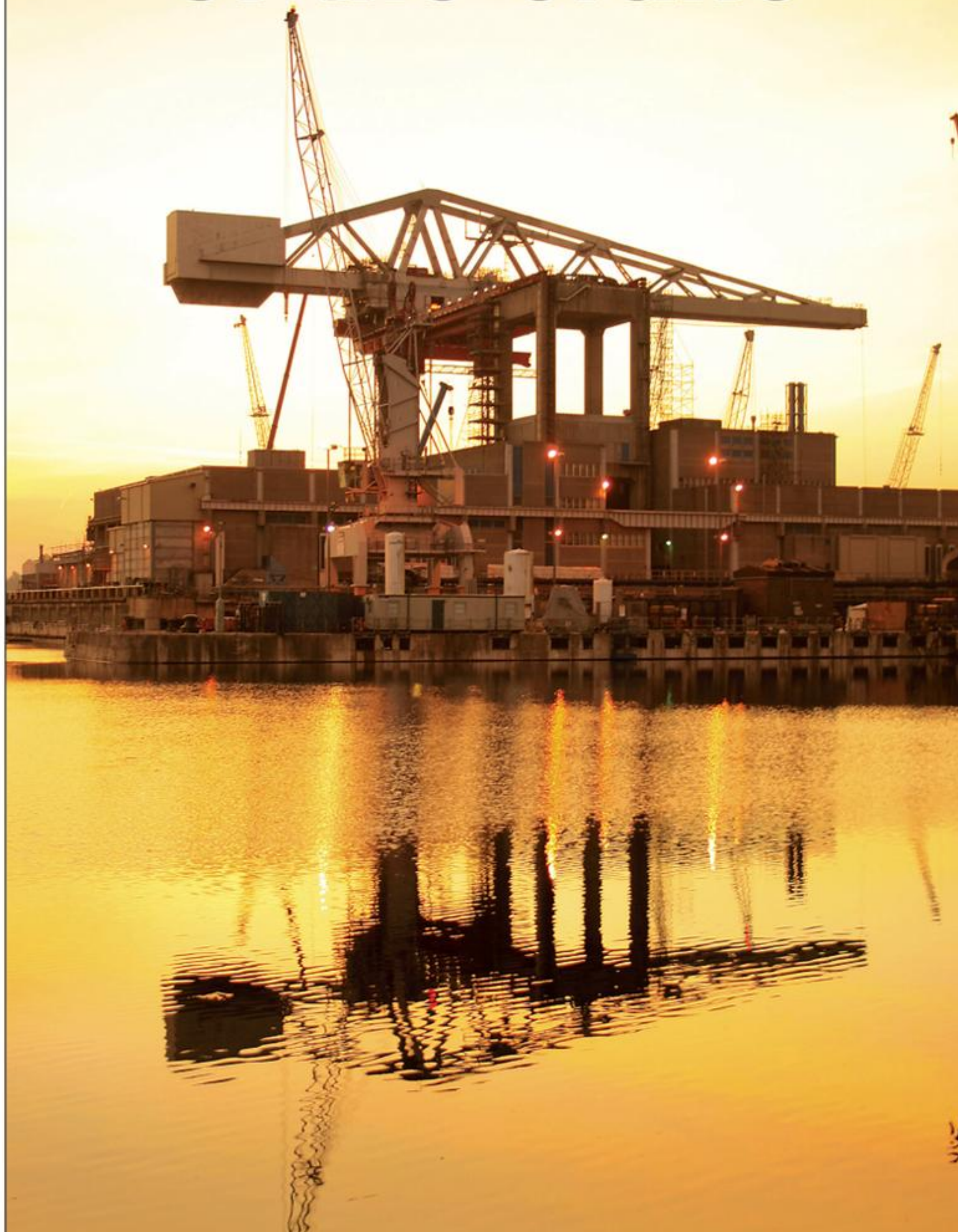
Instructor and 824's senior pilot Lt Cdr Steve Windebank hails from Portrush itself, Lt Pete Greenwood grew up in Lisburn and the east coast of the province, PO(ACMN) Thompson hails from Castle Rock and PO(AET) Thompson from Ballymena.

"We were able to gain a lot of positive PR as we engaged with the crowds, who were very interested to learn about an aircraft they rarely see in these parts," said Lt Cdr Windebank.

824's display season closed with the autumn show at Duxford (cold, wet, windy...).



## No longer the age of the crane



ONE of the dominant features of the Devonport skyline is no more after a gigantic crane was dismantled.

The 1,450-tonne structure (pictured above on the eve of demolition by Malcolm Smith of Babcock Marine) has towered over the Hamoaze – and over the submarine refit complex in the naval base – for three decades.

But now the crane – thought to be the largest in western Europe – is no longer needed and has had to make way as part of a revamp of facilities supporting the RN's submarines.

It has been used since the 1970s in refuelling Britain's hunter-killer nuclear submarine fleet.

A specialist Dutch firm, Mammoet (Dutch for 'mammoth') was called in to dismantle the crane; it previously worked on raising the sunken Russian submarine Kursk seven years ago.

Mammoet was chosen because its method of removing the crane in one piece proved considerably safer and faster (knocking six months off the projected timeframe) and ensured

staff in neighbouring offices didn't have to be relocated for weeks on end.

The firm used some of the kit in the Kursk operation to move the crane's jib – 120m (393ft) long and 22m (72ft) high – inch-by-inch horizontally across temporary beams to a position directly over a dock, where a floating barge was waiting to take it.

The crane and the metal tower that supported the structure – capable of lifting up to 80 tonnes – are being dismantled over the winter.

In its place, a £200m 'future nuclear facilities' complex will be built over the coming four or five years, featuring a 'low level defuelling' system.

"The removal of the crane is a major milestone in the upgrading of nuclear submarine facilities here in Devonport," said Roger Hardy, Babcock Marine's submarine managing director.

"This represents a significant step towards the completion of new facilities which will be constructed to the highest nuclear standards in the world."



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# Engage the enemy



● 3 Troop, Whiskey Company, 45 Commando, rest at their base in Sangin after their first patrol



## START as you mean to go on.

The very day the men of 42 Commando were declared 'operational' amid the heat and dust of Afghanistan they were rolling into action against the Taliban in the insurgents' one-time stronghold.

A column kicked up huge clouds of sand as drivers using night vision goggles steered the armoured vehicles through the south-western suburbs of Kandahar.

Overhead helicopters served as the 'eyes in the sky' for Lima Company and a small group of Afghan National Army troops.

The aim: to patrol an area of Kandahar – once the capital of the Taliban's empire – and upset the insurgents who were using the cloak of the religious periods of Ramadan and Eid to hide their activities.

The commandos found a weary and downtrodden populace eager to shake off the Taliban yoke.

And that's something they might do thanks to a 'surge' into a nearby stronghold held by the fundamentalists.

After the initial foray into the suburbs of Kandahar, a combined Anglo-Afghan-Canadian operation – codename Aray – struck in force in a six-day clash which threw the enemy off balance.

Aray began with 42 Cdo and 3rd Battalion Royal Canadian Regiment approaching a suspected Taliban staging post and headquarters south-west of Kandahar.

The Anglo-Canadians overcame the enemy's screening force – which prompted the main Taliban units to show their hand, and present targets for Allied firepower.

While the Commando, Reconnaissance Force and Afghan troops seized a knife-edge ridge which dominated the landscape before moving in on the enemy HQ, helicopters ferried Kilo Company – The Black Knights – into the edge of the village of Nakonay, which was captured after a series of fire-fights with the foe.

For the next five days there were sporadic clashes with the Taliban, but the combination of the marines' firepower and strikes from Apache gunships finally brought an end to the fighting around Nakonay.

The net result: a vast haul of ammunition (subsequently blown up by Canadian engineers), equipment, bomb-making kit, plus reams of intelligence gathered for future operations.

The battle done, Canadian armour ploughed a new road home to Kandahar for the ground troops; the Black Knights clambered back into their aircraft.

"Kandahar airfield is best described as a multi-national zoo," explained Lt Alex Burlingham, "populated by all manner of nationalities, headquarters and capabilities."

42 form one element of the Regional Battle Group (South), a force with a mission as broad as its battlefield: it stretches across southern Afghanistan from the borders with Pakistan to those of Iran.

The ultimate goal is, of course, to bring stability to a country which hasn't known peace for three decades.

To that end, the battle group can strike at Taliban 'safe havens', provide a reassuring presence during voter registration for impending elections, and deliver humanitarian aid before the Afghan winter sets in.

"Such is the geographic range of our area that we may well be the first International Security Assistance Force personnel people have encountered – in fact, this has already proven to be the case," said Lt Burlingham.

42 Commando's operations in Kandahar are distinct from the rest of 3 Commando Brigade, which has now taken over command of British forces in Helmand from 16 Air Assault Brigade.

It is 18 months since the brigade was in charge of Task Force Helmand.

That six-month tour of duty was hailed by General Sir Richard Dannatt – the Chief of the General Staff – as "among the finest pieces of soldiering I have ever seen".

"Eighteen months down the line, the commandos have a lot to live up to."

The important thing, says Brig Gordon Messenger, 3 Cdo Bde's Commanding Officer, is to "continue the momentum" created by the British Army's operations – the most high-profile of which was the successful delivery of a turbine to the power station at the Kajaki dam.

"The sterling work by 16 Air Assault

ROYAL MARINES  
COMMANDO



● Two DROPs trucks throw up clouds of dust as they race across the steppe at sunset and (left) Kilo Company, 45 Commando, head off on patrol





# more closely



Brigade over the past six months has delivered real progress," Brig Messenger added.

It took a month for the Army and Royal Marines to trade places in Helmand (known as a Relief In Place).

The lengthy handover is invaluable, as Whiskey Company, 45 Commando, found as they moved into Sangin.

Sangin and the Upper Sangin valley will be home to the Arbroath-based Royals – Victor, Whiskey, X-Ray, Yankee and Zulu companies – until next spring.

Sangin was once a hotbed of Taliban activity. It is no longer, but nor is it pacified.

As the bulk of Whiskey Company arrived in the town, their compound came under ill-aimed enemy fire (all of which flew over the base, but caused panic among the locals).

The Royals grabbed helmets and body armour and rushed to the roof of the compound to see two men nervously popping their heads around the corner of a building. The Taliban promptly jumped on a motorbike and headed off, a long-barrelled weapon slung over the shoulder of the pillion passenger.

As the first day in Sangin drew to a close, 3 Troop headed off on its first patrol of Helmand: escorting supplies and troops to a forward patrol base.

"The first time on the ground will always be difficult, especially for those on their first operational tour," explained Capt Chris

Air, who led the inaugural patrol. "It was a complete success – and it will be the first of many."

3 Troop had to cover just 800 metres to reach that forward base on their first patrol. For the Commando Logistic Regiment, distances are measured in dozens of miles.



The CLR, based at Chivenor, is at the hub of Task Force Helmand operations.

To the lay person, helicopters may seem the panacea to mobility in Helmand, but when it comes to bulk transport, only the road will suffice.

On average, one Combat Logistic Patrol – comprising

upwards of 100 vehicles and manned not just by commandos, but also sailors, soldiers and RM musicians – rolls through Helmand each week delivering fuel and combat supplies.

"CLR is a 'big beastie,'" said its deputy commander Lt Col Steve Crouden. "It supports everything that goes on with British Forces in Helmand – not to mention working with every other international security force nation wherever we can."

The loggies relieved their Army counterparts, 13 Air Assault Supply Regiment RLC, who took the newly-arrived commandos out on the ground to get a flavour of life in Helmand.

"We've been given a thorough handover

by our predecessors – they went to great lengths to pass on the lessons they learned over the last six months," said Col Andy Maynard, CLR's CO.

His sentiments are echoed by all RM commanders taking charge in Afghanistan.

"16 Air Assault gave us an exceptional insight into how they found their tour and identified some extremely important changes in the tactics used by the Taliban," said Maj Ross Preston, Officer Commanding Whiskey Company.

"That's given us a head start in countering their actions."

"Whiskey Company have been relishing this tour for some time. "The security of Sangin is a very complicated undertaking. Our key aim is to get amongst the population, reach out to them and bring them on the side of the Afghan government."

The Senior Service currently comprises the largest single British presence in Afghanistan.

Apart from the aforementioned Royal Marine units, elements of the UK Landing Force Command and Support Group, the Harriers of the Naval Strike Wing, the Sea Kings of 845 and 846 and Lynx of 847 Naval Air Squadrons, plus elements of the Commando Helicopter Force, the helicopter repair specialists of Fleet Forward Support (Air), and the medics of the Hospital Squadron are all deployed in Helmand or Kandahar.



● (Right) A Whiskey Company marine repeats fire orders on a GPMG during a live-firing exercise



● Whiskey Company take cover from the dust after being dropped off by a Jungly Sea King in Sangin



# Journey is the reward

AROUND 200 years ago, exploration and adventure quite often relied on stout ships, willing hands and robust logistical support.

So where would you have found that magical combination at the turn of the 19th century?

No surprises here – the Royal Navy had been sailing into uncharted waters at the four

corners of the Earth for donkey's years by the time the Royal Geographical Society opened for business in 1830.

Early members of the Geographical Society of London, as it was first known, included Sir John Franklin, surveyor and Arctic explorer, statesman Sir John Barrow, Second Secretary of the Admiralty and a staunch supporter of Arctic exploration, and Rear Admiral Francis Beaufort, explorer and hydrographer.

Many of these early members were not just patrons of expeditions, but had done their time 'out in the field', whether that was painstakingly mapping coasts or chasing off to icy wastes as adventurers or rescuers.

The latter role fell to Clements Robert Markham in 1850 as a member of the ship's company of HMS Assistance, part of the Arctic Squadron which was searching for the lost Franklin expedition of 1845-48.

Markham left the Navy on his return home, but remained a loyal supporter, being conscious of the value of leadership and

endurance, qualities found in abundance in the Navy.

So when an expedition to the Antarctic was organised during Markham's presidency of the RGS, it was to the Navy that Markham turned.

The British National Antarctic Expedition of 1901-04 – the Discovery Expedition – was a very dark blue affair, led by Robert Falcon Scott FRGS and including Ernest Shackleton.

Although it was for the ill-fated Terra Nova Expedition that Scott is best remembered, he achieved much to be admired in his first foray south.

He and his colleagues made the first major journeys across the interior, enduring exceptional hardships for the sake of their mission.

That sense of purpose remains one of the principles of the RGS, now the RGS (with Institute of British Geographers), the largest scholarly group of its type in the world.

Far from being a dry talking shop, the RGS has a remit which chimes very nicely with the RN of the 21st Century.

Perhaps the most obvious aspect would be that of every sailor's right to adventurous training.

One man who has made the most of the links between the Royal Navy and the RGS is PO Stephen Paris-Hunter, who led a sea kayak expedition to the Antarctic in 2007.

Since Stephen joined the Navy in 1988 he has

been involved in well over 20 expeditions of various types, from scientific work such as diving to tag hammerhead sharks off Cocos Island to carrying out underwater archaeological work on HMS Bounty off Pitcairn Island.

"I am always eager to take the opportunity to help others which has, in turn, developed my own character," he said.

"To succeed, one needs to be highly motivated, competent and focused. This often means spending a lot of one's own time and resources to achieve results, but the rewards are immense.

"During my service in HMS Endurance I became passionate about kayaking and, with the help of other like-minded individuals, set up Endurance Kayaking Club with the CO as president.

"This led to my being asked to lead a kayaking expedition in Antarctica which we called 66 South. It was a tremendous success.

"Rear Admiral Ibbotson, Flag Officer Sea Training, an enthusiastic sportsman and keen sea kayaker himself, supported the expedition by becoming our patron."

Members of the expedition, taken to Antarctica by HMS Endurance, intended to circumnavigate James Ross Island in sea kayaks, but thick ice blocked their 150-mile route.

Instead they visited a number of different islands, a 105-mile journey which brought extremes of weather.

Some days brought clear blue skies and mirror seas (pictured), allowing the adventurers to take in the spectacular scenery.

At other times snowstorms and rough seas curtailed their paddling, on one occasion forcing them to remain in their tents to avoid frostbite and exposure.

Using websites, the expedition spawned an educational pack, of which 4,000 were printed and sent to schools around the country.

The expedition also raised thousands of pounds for charity.

"As a result of these expeditions I have been invited to talk at the Scott Polar Research Institute of Cambridge University, Aberdeen University,

the Institute of Naval Medicine, International Survival Symposium and numerous schools," said Stephen.

"Much of this requires a great deal of work and preparation in one's own time.

"As a result of these contributions throughout the years, I was elected a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society in 2005, and the following year was invited to become a Club member which is a great honour."

Stephen believes the RN's emphasis on adventurous training as a means of developing crucial command, leadership and management skills, as well as discipline, physical and moral courage, means that the historic link between the RGS and RN is as valid now as it has ever been.

With almost 15,000 members of which 1,000 are elected Fellows, the RGS is moving from strength to strength with a turnover to support charitable activities exceeding £1m per annum.

A total of £160,000 worth of grants was distributed in 2007 which supported challenging projects, explorations, exciting educational programmes and military expeditions.

Adventurers and travellers within the Senior Service will find plenty on offer through the RGS to inspire an interest in the world.

The Society's resources are available to support expeditions and travels, and to provide practical advice, contacts and inspiration.

There is also the chance to learn more about the geographies of the world's emerging and historical nations, attend lectures and learn from the experiences of other expeditions.

Stephen can also provide information on the Explore 2008 expedition and fieldwork planning seminar in London on November 21-23 – email him on [stephenparishunter@hotmail.com](mailto:stephenparishunter@hotmail.com) or see the website [www.rgs.com/explore](http://www.rgs.com/explore)

Stephen has also arranged a special Navy News reader offer – join the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) before December 31 and save up to £30.

To find out more visit [www.rgs.org/joinus](http://www.rgs.org/joinus) and quote Navy News.



A FLURRY of small vessels – and one large one in distinctive battleship grey – paid homage to the greatest merchant ship of her generation as the QE2 sailed up the Clyde one last time.

Destroyer HMS Manchester was among the craft waiting in the Forth of Clyde for a final glimpse of the cruise liner.

The QE2 has clocked up nearly six million nautical miles in a career spanning 40 years. That career comes to an end imminently when she's converted into a floating hotel, museum and leisure complex in Dubai.

Before heading to the Middle East for good, the

liner has been conducting a farewell tour, a tour which took her to the river of her birth.

The cruise ship was built at the (now defunct) John Brown yard – which also built HMS Hood, Vanguard, Duke of York and the Royal Yacht Britannia, as well as QE2's predecessors, Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth.

She did not sail as far as the site of the Brown yard, only to Greenock on the south bank of the Clyde, where a sizeable crowd was waiting – as was a flotilla of craft, led by Manchester.

The destroyer was in Scotland to take part in the latest Joint Warrior war game, which began that same week and sucked in thousands of sailors, soldiers and airmen from Allied nations.

Among the Mancunians enjoying the spectacle on the Clyde was WO Bill Parry who remembers the QE2 more fondly than most of his shipmates.

Twenty-six years ago, the Cunard liner joined the task force heading south to liberate the Falklands.

And among those the liner brought home in the summer of 1982 were sailors from sunken ships, including the crew of HMS Antelope and one Bill Parry. He paid an emotional visit to the ship which carried him safely home from war.

As for the Busy Bee, she arrived on the Clyde after a 'high seas firing' (you might have seen it on the front cover...).

Rough weather or fine, Sea Dart is expected to

be able to take out an aerial threat.

It proved to be rough in the aerial test ranges, but no matter, the remote controlled drone was smashed out of the sky by a direct hit from the missile.

"The sound of the missile leaving the rail was awesome," enthused ET(WE) 'Dinger' Bell, witnessing his first Sea Dart launch.

"It was great to be part of the firing section and is an experience I'll remember for a long time."

Manchester has a typically busy few weeks ahead of her: after Joint Warrior there's training and exercising off Devonport, before a deployment to the Falklands in the new year.

■ Letters, pages 28-29

picture: wo1 ian arthur frpu clyde

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## A great break on Ark

AIRCRAFT carrier HMS Ark Royal welcomed on board five young adults and two staff (pictured above) from cancer charity CLIC Sargent.

Tour leader Lizzie Fennemore said: "We had a great time visiting the Ark Royal. It was really interesting to be shown around the ship and see some of what life onboard is like."

"The afternoon also provided a great break from treatment for the young people. My thanks to all."

The visit to the Fleet Flagship was organised by Lt Nicola Hopkins, and S/Lt Mark Paton and AB Liam Huffee hosted the visitors on board.

S/Lt Paton said: "I'm always amazed just how interested people are to find out about the Royal Navy and life on board a warship."

# Divers diversify to running

IT'S BEEN an unusual run-ashore for members of the Southern Diving Group...

The team of RN Clearance Divers took running ashore quite literally when they set out to complete a 128-mile sponsored charity run along the towpaths of the Leeds to Liverpool canal.

The eight runners, several of whom originally came from the north, included the CO of the Southern Diving Group Lt Cdr Chris Baldwin of Burnley, Lt Alex Gillyon from Altrincham, CPO Philip 'Butty' Butterworth from Burnley and CPO Steve Vernon from Wallesey.

They set out to run the towpaths of the north to raise money for charity, Against Breast Cancer (ABC).

Lt Cdr Baldwin said: "The ABC charity became the Diving Group's chosen charity when a member of the Group's friends suffered from the disease."

"The Royal Navy encourages adventurous training to maintain fitness and develop teamwork and leadership, so we thought it would be an excellent idea to combine our activity with a fundraiser for a great cause."

"I am also keen to show a little Royal Naval presence inland in a region that doesn't get to see what we do over the horizon."



● WO Rick Rickard and LD Sean Dunstan set off from Leeds to run to Liverpool; Lt Cdr Chris Baldwin, CPO(D) Andy Coulson, CPO Philip 'Butty' Butterworth and AB(D) Simon Wharton (in boat) look on

"And finally I would like to highlight the importance of the canal in the natural and cultural environment of the local community."

Among those whom they met upon the way were a party of dignitaries from Brierfield, Pendle, with members of the Royal British Legion.

Former POME Mike 'Yorky' Sutcliffe, welfare officer for Nelson RBL, said: "The RBL arranged with a local garage, Hillendale

Group, who are alongside the canal to provide a little rest-over spot and a good brew on what was a pretty foul day."

"However the Navy kept on going after our event, where Lt Cdr Baldwin presented both mayors with the unit crest."

"It's not often Lancashire towns in the middle of the Pennines can host the Navy – but they were delighted to do so."

To find out more about the charity, visit [www.aabc.org.uk](http://www.aabc.org.uk)

## Derby's dog day comes

THE Submariners Association in Derbyshire have been fundraising around Derby to support the Derby Guide Dog Puppy Appeal.

Through collections in the city and the TA 100 event the association managed to raise £701, with thanks to the local people, council and event organisers.

Terry Hall of the association said: "We were very lucky on the day with weather that started out very foggy and cool but by midday the weather turned glorious."

"Guide dogs and puppies, as well as submariner helpers, came and went throughout the day, but Cliff Beck and Nick stood like guardsmen on duty."

"The one thing I am sure of is that in reincarnation I hope I come back with four legs because the guide-dogs certainly got more attention than us two-legged helpers!"

"The whole day was rounded off with the Beat Retreat in the market-place by the band of the Corps of Royal Engineers, and nearly 12 hours after leaving home I arrived back very tired but immensely proud of the backing of the people of Derby for this project to raise £5,000 for a guide-dog puppy to be called Derby."

## Daring moves forward

ALTHOUGH HMS Daring is still in work-up, her ship's company are already forging ahead with building links with local communities.

Twelve members of the Type 45's crew headed up to the Small Heath School and Technology College in Birmingham to help with an engineering project called Moving Forward.

The project is revamping and restoring narrow boats and train carriages, with the intention of encouraging school leavers into engineering by giving them hands-on experience.

In addition to offering engineering expertise, the sailors also got involved sprucing up the site, visiting the school and sixth-form college and talking about life in the Royal Navy with the students.

## Shelterbox shocker at Culdrose

IT'S AN event unheard of! RNAS Culdrose is turning away Shelterbox.

But it's not quite as bad as it sounds...

The emergency aid charity has been a long-standing ally of the Cornish air station, a bond which remains firmly in place – however the Shelterbox Trust asked for the air station to give an 'unfriendly reception' to its latest recruits.

Personnel at the base have been asked to simulate 'bureaucratic obstacles' like those which Shelterbox trainees may encounter in the real world.

The teams were required to locate 100 Shelterboxes scattered around the site, then set up a refugee village with transport links.

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## One long night away

STUDENTS at Mullion School in Cornwall determined upon an unusual piece of fundraising when they approached RNAS Culdrose for advice on a 24-hour sleepout in arduous conditions.

Lt Billy Benton, the base's Fire Station Officer, took the lead, carefully crafting a survival scenario to tax the students' stamina and teamwork during this fundraising exercise.

He said: "The original request was for a 24-hour sleep-out, but I thought that it sounded too easy."

"Anyone can sleep out but I decided to offer something that would challenge them, so I put together a scenario that would require the students to survive."

Stripped of mobile phones, iPods and other inessential essentials, the students had to keep a fire lit for the duration, keep hot water available to cook their rations, patrol the campsite and take part in a Search and Rescue mission where they had to find a fake aircraft crash and carry the pilot to safety on a stretcher. At the end of the tough 24 hours, the students rushed back to the luxury of their own beds.

Lt Benton said: "I think they will appreciate their home comforts a lot more from now on."

"British Forces all over the world work routines similar to this on a daily basis for weeks at a time, so a 24-hour stint isn't that bad, but is very worthwhile."

The students were obviously too tired to speak...

The day's trials and tribulations raised funds to support a Ugandan village linked with the school.

## Chockablock with cheques

IT WAS a bumper crop of cheque presentations (and we almost broke our 'no giant cheques' rule for the photo...) at HMS Collingwood when 18 charities gathered to receive £1,000 each from the Fareham establishment's Open Day.

The proceeds from the event went to: the Mayor of Fareham's Appeal; Fareham Community Action; Ranvilles Children's Football Team; the Rainbow Centre; Kids; St Francis Special School; the Angling Foundation; Provincial Buses; Haslar Breast Screening Clinic; Solent MS

Therapies; Handicapped Children's Pilgrimage Trust; Gosport and Fareham Inshore Rescue Service (GAFIRS); Seafarers UK; Stubbington Ark; Rowan's Hospice; Naomi House Children's Hospice; SSAFA Forces Help; Rocky Appeal.

The Mayor of Fareham Cllr Ernest Crouch said: "On behalf of the 18 charities we have here today we would like to thank HMS Collingwood very much indeed."

"It seems the biggest collection boxes are always those that come from sailors."



## Beautiful boots

FOUR trainee sailors from HMS Raleigh set out to see their own faces when they took up the shoeshine trade.

Polishing maestros Recruits Ricardo Connell, Aaron Bennie, Christopher Morgan and Nicholas Leon (pictured above) made sure that everyone's boots were in spectacular condition for parade, all in return for a small donation to the RNBT.

The sailors' careful work has raised over £50 for the Naval charity.



news  
in brief

● **WO2 'Pincher' Martin** takes part in his first triathlon aged 48

■ **WO2 'PINCHER'** Martin of MOD Abbey Wood has just completed his first triathlon aged 48 in aid of charity Epilepsy Research.

Pincher said: "I did it in memory of my son who died of an epileptic convulsion in 2000."

"My son died while I was on leave from supporting HMS Tireless when she was in Gibraltar undergoing a major repair."

Pincher completed his first triathlon in two hours 37 minutes, but it determined to shave at least seven minutes off that time in next year's London Triathlon.

If you would like to support his efforts, send cheques payable to Epilepsy Research to him at DE&S, Cedar 31, Mailpoint 3340, MOD Abbey Wood, Bristol BS34 8JH or call 9352 33297.

■ **THE Naval Families Federation** has benefited from a donation of £4,747 from insurers Towergate Wilsons.

Jackie Jackson of the charity said: "We are a small team, and run on a small budget, but with a big message to get out worldwide."

"This money will enable us to do that by allowing us to purchase marketing materials and promotional items that we can then take to any events that we attend around the country."

■ **THE British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBS)** handed over the proceeds of its Big Salute to five Forces' charities: BLESMA (British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association); Combat Stress; Headley Court; Veterans Aid and St Dunstan's.

Since its launch in May the BFBS Big Salute has raised over £75,000.

■ **MOTORCYCLISTS** were urged to take to two wheels in memory of all the troops that have died on duty since World War 2.

The 17-mile ride saw the motorcyclists head to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire to attend a short memorial service to the Armed Forces on October 11.

■ **RUNNING** the London Marathon, Lt Justin Cloney and CPO Kenny Walker collected £5,050 for Macmillan Nurses.

The two raised the money in conjunction with BAE Systems, where the two men are based at the Barrow shipyard while submarine HMS Astute is being fitted out.

news  
in brief

# RNBT extends a helping hand

**FORMER** sailor PO(Radar) Eric Cross has been helped by a grant from the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT).

Eric, who served a full 22 years in the Royal Navy, was one of the men who helped dispose of the bomb that dropped on HMS Antrim during the Falklands Conflict, cutting through the metal deck to get to the unexploded bomb.

Despite having served his full stint with the RN and even having served with the RNBT, Eric did not think of turning to the RNBT for help when a shoulder injury forced him to stop work.

He said: "I didn't think I'd get help from the RNBT as I used to sit on the Grants Committee in the 1960s and 1970s, serving as a committee member for seven years."

"Having been on the committee, I thought I'd never be able to get help myself."

When Eric fell into difficulties, he arranged to see the local council housing officer, who advised him to contact SSAFA Forces Help.

SSAFA in turn contacted the RNBT asking for financial assistance to help Eric clear his utility bill arrears.

With RNBT's help, Eric has cleared his rent and electricity backlog, and life is now restored to an even keel.

Eric, who now keeps to a strict budget, said: "Now I'm straight, I'm laughing – and all thanks to the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust."

For more information, contact the RNBT at [rnbt@rnbt.org.uk](mailto:rnbt@rnbt.org.uk) or call 023 9266 0296.



● **Naval veteran Eric Hill** looks down at the small white ensign that he rescued from his locker on HMS Antrim which had been blown apart by the force of the bomb ripping through the decks during the Falklands War



● **Sailors from destroyer HMS Gloucester** at the Trafalgar Cemetery in Gibraltar

## Sprucing up Trafalgar

ONE of the Navy's sacred grounds has once again received a spruce-up as the result of the visit by 14 volunteers from destroyer HMS Gloucester.

The warship's Lt Dickie Byrd visited the Trafalgar Cemetery in Gibraltar and realised that a spot of extra work by willing Naval hands would make all the difference.

"The drains were full of leaves and discarded litter, some of the graves were overgrown, and there

was a lot of dead vegetation that needed picking up," he said.

In total some 43 full bags of rubbish, unwanted plants and dead vegetation were taken away.

Fellow organiser POMA Jon Coates said: "It has been a delight to help out in a place that holds so much history and that a lot of young sailors onboard took great pleasure in volunteering their services to help maintain this historical site."

## Armed Forces Memorial wins popular vote

THE Armed Forces Memorial in Staffordshire has been voted the UK's favourite Lottery-funded heritage project.

At the National Lottery Awards screened on BBC1 the memorial won the title of Best Heritage Project and a £2,000 cash prize.

The memorial was up against hundreds of other organisations from across the UK – and this year a record number of votes were cast.

Chairman of the Armed Forces Memorial Trust Vice Admiral Sir John Dunt said: "The Memorial has benefited enormously from Lottery funding and allowed us to build a truly inspirational Memorial to all members of our Armed Forces who have been killed on duty or terrorism since World War 2."

## Haslar takes up oars

WORLD Radiography Day on November 8 is being marked by staff from Royal Hospital Haslar by a rowing challenge.

Set up by Chief Radiographer CPO Mark Dolan, a team of ten men and women will set out to row 100km on a rowing machine to raise money for charity Help for Heroes.

Mark said: "The team has serving and former members from all three Services involved, and due to this we have decided to use this as a chance to raise funds for the charity."

"Especially as many of us have spent time on operations in Iraq and Afghanistan in recent times and seen what our soldiers are dealing with and witnessed the price they are paying for serving our country."

The rowers will be found from 10am toiling away on a rowing machine at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum in Gosport, next to RH Haslar.



## Commandos climb for CF Trust

CLIMB Commando brought together two Royal Marine Commandos, L/Cpl Joe Hogan and Mne Patrick Goddard, and one journalist, Joe Clapson, to climb to the summit of Mont Blanc and conquer the Haute Route across the Alps.

The three (pictured above) raised £10,000 for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust, a charity that funds research into the condition, ensures care for those living with CF, and offers information and support to anyone affected.

The three men began from Chamonix in France, before running, walking and climbing 160km across snow, ice and rocks to Zermatt in Switzerland.

L/Cpl Hogan, whose brother suffers with the condition, said: "It was an awesome experience which we will never forget."

"All the hard work and long hours in all sorts of conditions were well worth it. The views on top of Mont Blanc were amazing and hopefully we've raised a lot of awareness for the CF Trust."

Mne Goddard added: "It was tough work but we're bootnecks so we got over any problems."

"To put it into perspective though, I'd say up on Mont Blanc with the wind chill it was colder than cold weather training in Norway."

Their trekking efforts were backed by mountaineers Sir Ranulph Fiennes and Sir Chris Bonington, and by the Prime Minister Gordon Brown, whose son Fraser has cystic fibrosis.

L/Cpl Hogan said: "It was a massive boost to have Sir Ranulph and Sir Chris as patrons, and receiving a letter from the Prime Minister motivated us even more."

"Knowing the Prime Minister was following our fundraising efforts was a real incentive to do well."

The three are urging supporters to keep donating to help them burst through their target of £10,000 at [www.justgiving.com/climbcommando](http://www.justgiving.com/climbcommando).

With thanks to Joe Clapson

## Lourdes lookback

THE Joint Services Hosanna House Group pilgrimage took place in Lourdes once again this year, taking a group of ex-Service personnel and their dependants with special needs to the French town.

Group leader Richard Tipping said: "During times of war, Lourdes welcomed the sick and injured and afterwards prayed for those who had crossed the bar, consoled the living and worked for peace."

"Fifty years ago the French military invited their arch-rivals the German military to a Pilgrimage of Peace, and this has grown annually until this year over 33 countries sent over 20,000 military in their full ceremonial dress."

This year the Bishop to the Forces Bishop Tom Burns said mass on the grass at Hosanna House; the same gardens which were the site of the Hosanna House Barbecue with the military band laying on entertainment.

Richard said: "Other highlights of our pilgrimage are the marching with our Service comrades through the streets of Lourdes behind the band, being applauded by the onlookers – making this a very emotional moment."

If you would like to find out more about the group, contact Richard Tipping on 01752 787697 or visit the website at [jshhg507hq.com](http://jshhg507hq.com).



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## Telegram for Miss Lloyd

WHILE this month sees the release of the autobiography of the nation's oldest Naval sailor Henry Allingham (see page 44), a lady who must be a strong contender for the title of the nation's oldest Wren released hers last year.

*Miss Lloyd Remembers...* is the title of the small autobiography of Noreen Lloyd, the daughter of a Naval captain, who joined the WRNS at the start of World War 2.

The wartime years saw service around the UK, including a terrible night-time air raid on her base of HMS Watchful in Great Yarmouth which killed eight of her fellow Wrens, before Second Officer Lloyd's final posting to HMS Drake in Plymouth.

On October 13, Miss Lloyd celebrated her 105th birthday at home in Wales with friends and family.

Her friend Margaret Strange said: "She is an amazing woman with the ability to ignore the disabilities of age to concentrate instead on the world and the people who visit."

"Her mind is sharp and her memory good. She enjoys a glass of whisky and enjoys good food. She doesn't even look or sound her age."

"She looks back on her years in the WRNS with surprising clarity, and for years kept in touch with friends made during that time."

Margaret added: "Now she has outlived them all."

"Is Noreen now the oldest Wren?"

## Simon scores a triple



WARRANT Officer Simon Lewis, Squadron WO of 814 NAS in RNAS Culdrose, has just notched up his 3,000th hour in the air.

Lt Chris Simpson said: "WO Lewis has been on 814 NAS for two years now, since joining as Chief Aircrewman in 2006. He is well known and very well respected by all at Culdrose. He was promoted this spring."

"Having recently returned from Orion 08 on board HMS Illustrious, WO Lewis is now involved in the re-deployment of elements of the squadron out to the Middle East."

"And often now calls himself the 814 NAS Travel Agent."

## Profile of a hero

A DISTINCTIVE profile links the faces of Mrs Anna Tribe and her ancestor hero Vice Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson.

The new life-size bronze sculpture was crafted by Robert Hornyold-Strickland, himself the son of a Naval officer, and meticulously researched to depict the great Naval hero on the eve of Trafalgar in 1805.

Information was sought from the archives of the Royal Naval Museum in Portsmouth and the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, seeking clues and evidence from contemporary books, fashion and artefacts.

The sculptor deduced that Nelson wore his hair low over his right eyebrow to disguise a scar from the Battle of the Nile in 1798.

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Alan Massey unveiled the new sculpture, commissioned by an anonymous donor, at the historic wardroom at HMS Nelson.

He said: "I am delighted to mark the auspicious anniversary date by unveiling this generous gift to the MOD Art collection."

"It is a fitting tribute to Vice Admiral Lord Nelson and I am particularly pleased that it will find a home in HMS Nelson's wardroom."

## Passing on the family sword

A ROYAL Naval sword has passed from father to son when Cdre Chris Palmer, the commanding officer of RNAS Yeovilton, handed on his blade to his son Nicholas.

Nicholas, due to pass out of Britannia Royal Naval College as *Navy News* goes to press, has decided not to follow his father into the air, and has chosen the path of surface warfare instead.

As a teenager, Nicholas came to know BRNC rather well – his father was the Commander there.

The graduate of Exeter University is also very familiar with his father's current stomping ground – he has spent the past year working at the Fleet Air Arm Museum while recovering from a sporting injury before starting his RN career.

Almost 33 years separate the two men's careers, but the sword forges an unbroken link.

● **Father Cdre Chris Palmer looks proudly on as his son Nicholas holds his Royal Naval sword**

Picture CPO Kev Preece



# Matt is the music-man

"IF YOU write a song on the ukulele and it works, then it's a good tune," so says POMA Matt Hicks.

And the Culdrose-based medic should know, as one of his songs 'Hand Brake Turns' won him the position of semifinalist in the UK Songwriting Contest.

The (despite its name) international competition is supported by such bastions of the music industry as BBC Radio, the Brit Trust and the Guild of International Songwriters and Composers.

Matt, who is one half of band Union Circus with another Naval Matt, PO Naval Nurse Matt Rawlins, said: "There were some 6,200 international entries this year, so I am absolutely elated that I got this far in the competition."

The song itself is a tale of going

out in the evening, meeting a young lady, and deciding where next to go with their lives. Matt admits that this is a classic themed song, although not usually on the ukulele...

Apparently it was composed during the medic's six-month deployment to the Gulf in HMS Argyll, where he took with him both his guitar (his first-love of 23 years) and his ukulele (a recent dalliance of two years).

He said: "I kept my ukulele under my desk most of the time, ready to pull out to entertain the troops."

Union Circus are, first and foremost, a guitar-based band who can be found gigging across the south-west – Naval Nurse Matt is based at Derriford.

The unusual addition of a ukulele to their gigging repertoire came about as the result of a performance by two ukulele

players at an open mic night that Matt attended – "It was terrible, but it made me want to delve into the instrument more."

Although it did lead to a slight change in direction for Matt from his original musical inspirations of the Smiths, Jeff Buckley and Nick Drake.

Matt however describes himself as slightly chirpier than the average acoustic depressive which is reflected in Union Circus' songs about love, bad love, the environment, war and being skint.

"The tunes on a ukulele tend to be a bit more uplifting, it does force you to explore the fret board."

"It's good to have an instrument that forces you into more positive songs."

Find out more about Union Circus online at <http://profile.myspace.com/unioncircus>



## Stitch-up for Jessie

THE CHALLENGE: have your photo taken reading the *Coventry Telegraph* in a strange and exotic place...

The winner: LET(ME) 'Jessie' Owens of HMS Kent, sitting astride the Type 23's 4.5in gun in Hong Kong.

The stitch-up? "Jessie doesn't want anything

said about this so I think a stitch-up is called for," said his photographer LA(Phot) Owen King.

"Jessie won a holiday, and I would love it if we could have it in your People section as he would be buying a crate for the mess if it does make it to print."

Job done. (Twice.)

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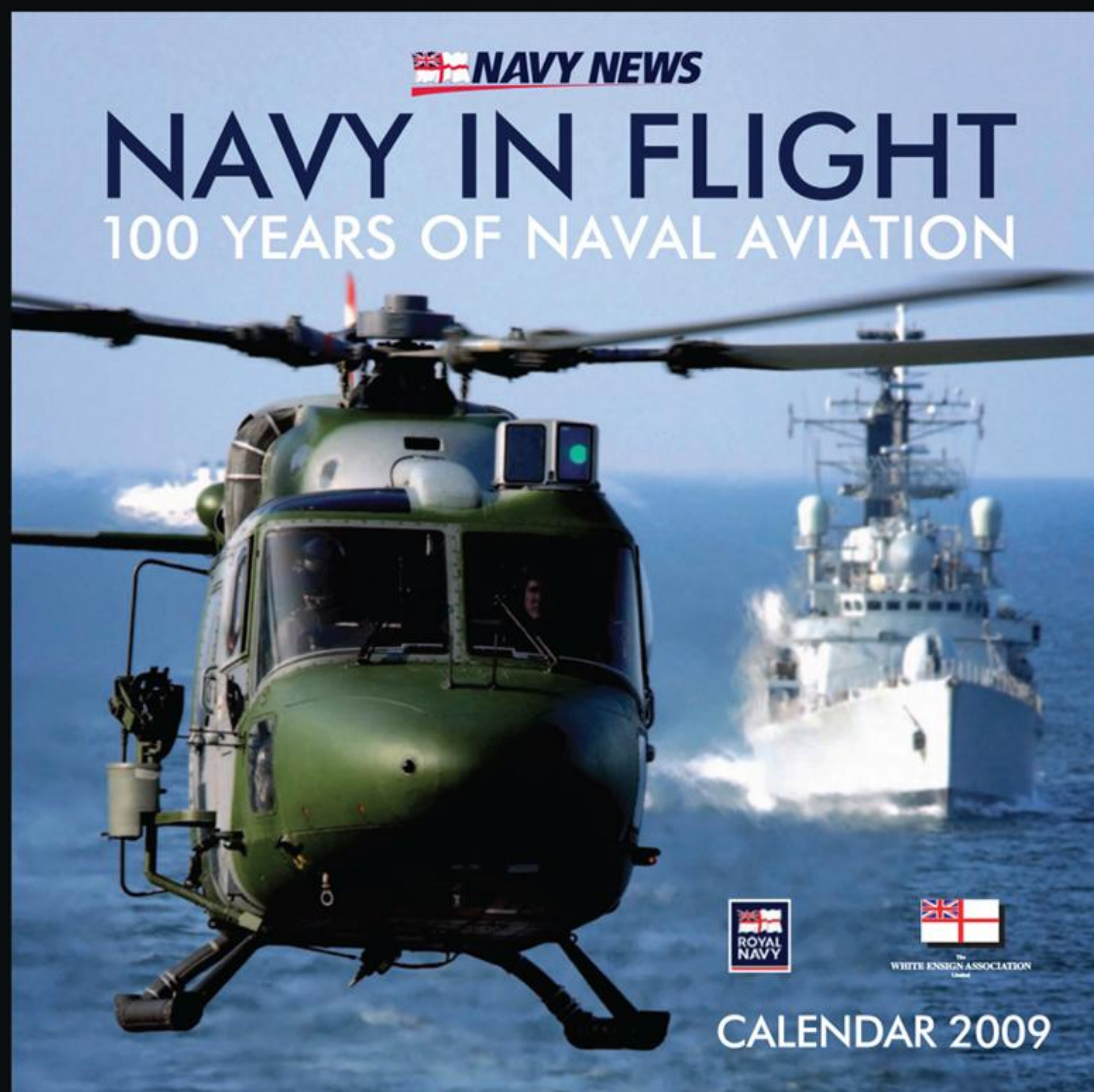
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Many thanks to the Armed Forces and the Fleet Air Arm Museum's photographers.  
Front cover: A Lynx Mk7 of 847 NAS takes off from the flightdeck of HMS Ark Royal with  
destroyer HMS Manchester in the background during NATO exercise Noble Mariner.  
Photograph: PO(Phot) Brad Bradbury



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# Rising to the

THE strains of *Dancing Queen* by Abba floated through Ashdown Forest as a slightly mad, stropky tribal leader toyed with an earnest bunch of men and women.

Nearby, two lads and two lasses took a dip in a chilly lake, while another chap, in well-pressed, brand-new working rig, sat on a small wooden bench and was dragged through a muddy puddle.

Elsewhere, a toy dog (Scruffy) was scooped up in a bucket on a system of ropes, watched anxiously by a group of onlookers.

And hanging on the breeze were the words of a syndicate leader: "We haven't got a plan yet..."

The key word here is 'yet'.

Within minutes a plan would have been formulated and refined.

And although some plans were very good, and others not quite so good, all were implemented with enthusiasm, no little skill and with

**Report: Mike Gray Pictures: Lt Simon Coley RNR**

huge smiles.

Realistic training for reservists? Definitely – you just need to suspend a little disbelief.

The Crowborough Challenge, HMS President's flagship reservist training weekend which attracts units nationwide, had tongue-in-cheek overtones.

And it was the sense of mischief that fuelled the smiles at every corner of the Pippingford Park training area in East Sussex.

But there was a serious theme – that of an earthquake which has devastated an unspecified region – and any number of Pooh traps designed to ensure that the Challenge took participants outside the comfort zone of a sunny and warm autumn day in the Weald.

There were a dozen tasks to complete, testing management, communication and physical skills.

The weekend takes up much of President's manpower – some 40 people were involved in creating,

running and taking part in the event.

The total number involved exceeded 200, and almost every reserve unit was represented, amongst the 12 ten-strong teams, as well as the Sussex and Cambridge URNs.

All specialisations were represented, as were all ranks, from new entry trainees to admirals – specifically Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Alan Massey and Prince Michael of Kent, Honorary Rear Admiral (Maritime Reserve).

Stepping beyond specialisations, the versatility of reservists was evident at every turn.

Above Water Force Protection (AWFP) and Maritime Trade Organisation (MTO) specialists brought additional benefits such as paramedic skills from civilian life.

**And versatility was important in overcoming the challenges.**

*Car Crash*, for example presented teams with a scene of carnage; two bodies and two casualties.

Unknown to them, one of the injured has a femoral bleed and will die in three minutes unless he receives the right care.

A helicopter is needed to evacuate team and casualties alike – but the comms are in the crashed car, which will blow up in eight minutes.

Next up (teams have to navigate and jog between stances) is *Rescue the Dog*, where the aforementioned Scruffy – the pet of children orphaned by the earthquake – is trapped in a well surrounded by live electric cables.

"This is hearts and minds stuff and a bit of PR – front page of the *Sun*, that kind of thing," said Lt Cdr Peter Gracey.

The teams are provided with equipment – ropes, pulleys and the like – plus some red herrings.

Further on, Tawe Division, HMS Cambria's Swansea-based offshoot, showed an admirable

sense of sacrifice when they set out to *Find the Medical Supplies*.

Four of the Welsh team volunteered to swim, avoiding the need to build a raft, and despite the cold there were plenty of smiles before and after their dip.

The combined Caroline, Dalriada and Scotia team also sent in swimmers with the same good-humoured results.

"I think it has been excellent and everyone has really enjoyed themselves," said AB Alan Ferguson (HMS Dalriada).

"This is my first time at Crowborough, and I think it is really well-organised and useful, the sort of things we would not expect to do or find ourselves in."

"Putting yourself forward as leader is no problem – this is a great bunch of people and they all help each other even when they are not leading. Everyone throws something into the hat."

"And yes, the water was cold, but once you get moving about, it wasn't too bad."

Atop a small hill nearby another task, *Clear the Tank Mines for the Relief Trucks* (for *Tank Mines* read *Traffic Bollards*) required the setting up of a good old-fashioned bosun's chair – with another dunking for those who get it wrong.

The President team, most of whom could count their service in days rather than months or years, showed plenty of spirit but lacked a little finesse in line-throwing and the working of pulleys.

One member nominated to sit in the chair felt like a "lamb to the slaughter": and after being dragged through the water observed "I might as well have walked across."

Lt Cdr Ross Baxter (HMS Sherwood), who ran the stance, said it was one of the most difficult challenges.

Two of the more unusual stances involved a personal rather than muscular approach.

In one corner of the forest teams





# Challenge



● Prince Michael of Kent with (left) Lt Greg Young and Lt Cdr Ant Chapman of HMS President

had to create a three-minute PR video promoting the role of the RN to sceptical locals.

HMS Wildfire concentrated on stereotypes; a helmeted policeman sported a floral garland, and in the key scene an RN officer hands a cup of tea to a smiling islander.

Then came the self-assessment. "Any problems?" asked directing staff.

"Ham acting!" came the swift response.

And talking of ham acting, S/Lt Charlie Krasun (HMS President) was in Oscar-winning form as the errant warlord with a penchant for Swedish pop music.

The scenario was far-fetched and caused much merriment, but Charlie – an Arabic interpreter – said there was method (acting?) behind the madness.

"It is almost the opposite of a standard leadership task," said Charlie.

"This is all about human interaction, empathy and maintaining a personal contact as opposed to solving the task."

"Teams have to decide whether a leader can negotiate and lead, or does the leader rely on someone else negotiating and take a strategic position."

"It is important that they get all the information to keep on top of the situation – it is very easy to get divided."

HMS King Alfred began in pedestrian fashion, the warlord decreed, but pulled it together to make an excellent team effort, making a crucial decision at the right time.

For the record, a team representing HMS Vivid were the winners of the challenge, greatly pleasing the unit's new

Commanding Officer, Cdr Angie Hancock.

And when the Challenge itself was over there was still Lt Katie Kendrick's Sunday programme, featuring the RN Fitness Test on a no-risk basis (it was non-compulsory, so those who failed knew what they had to work on, while those who passed could sign off their chit), play team sports, meet the chaplains and try out the assault course.

But it was the wider gain which delighted organisers – and gave at least one VIP food for thought.

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Alan Massey said: "I think the value of this is enormous."

"I have seen three or four syndicates and they are grinning from ear to ear and they are getting an enormous amount out of it."

Admiral Massey said one of his key objectives was to drive forward improvements in leadership training, and Crowborough was proving useful.

"As you go round you see wonderful examples," he said.

"We need more consistency and open minds to best practice – inviting people to do things that they would not normally do."

"There are some very good things here, and I will try to get more of our people out at weekends – pause for a sharp intake of breath..."

The admiral also noted that under Cdre Thorne the Maritime Reserve was making good progress towards closer integration with the regular service, much as the RM Reserve has achieved.

"The goal is the day when a reservist can take his or her place in a front-line unit and be there not just as part of a team but leading the team," he said.

"Well done; this is excellent,

and what we in the Navy should be doing."

Cdre Stephen Thorne, Commodore Maritime Reserves, said: "It is great that Second Sea Lord is going to take some ideas away and introduce them to the regulars – we have been doing this for ages."

He said the question was how could reservists be tested under pressure after the ships were withdrawn in the mid-1990s, and events such as the Crowborough Challenge developed to fill the gap.

"There is no rank here," he added.

"Everyone is equal, so you can see people as they are and assess potential. If someone has got an idea, he or she is equal in the team ethos."

"It is fundamental to the way people think."

"In the first half-hour or so they are all looking at rank, but at the end of the day they are a team. After a couple of stances they are starting to act like a team."

"Also, in some teams at the beginning it's like Sgt Wilson from *Dad's Army* – after you, awfully nice."

"By the end, it's 'You do this, you do that,' and people take command. That is the outcome we are looking for."

Lt Cdr Ant Chapman, the man charged with staging the event for his CO, said that the training delivered to reservists "tries to match as closely as possible the training the regular Service gets," as well as being cost-effective.

"For example, on the media stance, it is the same as they would find at FOST, and the medical stance is exactly the same," he said.

He added: "The whole event is about Command, Leadership and Management (CLM)."

"The RN ethos is teamwork and team-building while giving them the skills they will need for those who are deploying."

Lt Cdr Chapman also paid tribute to the dedication of organisers and participants.

"Lt Young has done all the work, and it has been absolutely superb," he said.

"There is no one here who was not at work at 5pm yesterday afternoon."

"Yet from people running things to manning stands, we have produced this event."

"That's why I think Second Sea Lord has gone away a happy man." Lt Greg Young said: "As far as I am concerned the Challenge is a fantastic success."

"The staff have worked really hard to produce a fantastic event."

"It could not work successfully unless everyone gives 100 per cent – and they've put in 110 per cent."

"If you talk to any of the groups I am sure they will say they have



had fun, they have worked hard and they have learned."

"Everyone is going to get something different out of it and have learned different techniques and everyone has learned CLM – one of Second Sea Lord's key initiatives."

Prince Michael said the weekend had given reservists the chance to demonstrate their leadership, and noted that the key elements had not changed much since he joined the Army 40 years ago.

One stand of particular interest to the Prince was media training.

Reservist media specialists listened to a presentation by sailors, then questioned the team in such a way as to illustrate potential pitfalls.

"Whatever tricks you try to play on reservists at this stage, they have the comfort of knowing they are not going to be quoted, and they will be tremendously better off later as a result of those lessons," said Prince Michael.

● Clockwise from left: the President team fight a losing battle with the bosun's chair; AB Ian Miller of Tawe Division prepares for a dip in the lake; 'smoke-blinded' 'firemen' are ready to be guided to the seat of a 'blaze' (that's enough apostrophes – Ed); another victim of the bosun's chair; HMS King Alfred jogs between stances; Members of the Caroline/Dalriada/Scotia team take to the lake; yet another dunking in the chair; the impassive Abba-loving warlord blanks a negotiator from HMS King Alfred; our hero – HMS President's Mike Godman rescues the baby (all right then, plastic bottle) from the blazing building (er, forest clearing...); the Tawe Division swimmers communicate with their (dry) leader onshore







# The golden

**KING MIDAS has indeed brought a touch of gold to bear upon the minehunters of the NATO groups during his namesake exercise – golden sunshine casts a golden glow on the ships basking in the Mediterranean sea, writes Helen Craven.**

**THERE'S** a murky grey screen. The cathode-ray tube has burnt a ghostly circle into the centre, and this is the only discernable detail against the striations of grey.

The minehunter's yellow submersible is struggling to find a picture amid the weed and sand on the Mediterranean seabed.

Suddenly the picture shifts – the grey nothing focuses into a striped pelt of seaweed and sandy ridges.

To quote a remark from earlier in the day: "It's like the bloody Himalayas down there."

Exercise Noble Midas has brought together the minehunters and larger ships from all four of the NATO task groups.

It is almost impossible to write any story about the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation without drowning a reader in a sea of acronyms – the minehunters and their associated ships are part of SNMCMG1 and SNMCMG2 or Standing NATO Mine Counter Measures Group 1 and 2; the larger ships are part of SNMG1 and SNMG2 or Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 and 2; and that's without even delving into the recent past where such units were known as SNFM or STANAVFORMED, or even STANAVFORCHAN in earlier decades.

So there, the acronyms are dealt with in one great indigestible chunk and henceforth the minehunters which I am here to see shall be referred to as Group 1 (although you will have to forgive me the occasional appearance of an abbreviated NATO and HMS).

And thankfully where recent stories of minehunters in the Gulf have had the added complication of Brocklesby's crew inside HMS Chiddingfold, within NATO's walls we simply have HMS Ledbury's crew in HMS Ledbury and HMS Roebuck's crew within HMS Roebuck – although they're having to squeeze in a few more

bodies as the flagship for the battlestaff...

The two British ships within Group 1 are at polar ends of their working spectrum.

On board minehunter Ledbury, after a long stint on fish duties, the mine-men are rather enjoying a return to their core business.

On board the hydrography vessel Roebuck the ship's duties as minehunter flagship have meant a prolonged break from her usual surveying routine. Most of her surveying equipment has been stripped out of the ops room to make space for the NATO machines for her command and control role, and her specialist survey boat has stayed back at her Devonport home.

For Roebuck it has been a long and demanding year – by the end of it, she'll have visited 27 ports in 13 different countries, been at sea for 11 months with barely a handful of weeks at home; a serious stint of sea-time for this non-rotational crew of 57.

And on Roebuck, there have been neither the challenges nor the rewards of the minehunters which she tends.

The NATO games have dropped some different tasking into their hands, as I'm told cheerfully by LLogs(CS)(D) Becky Mudie who had obviously relished the opportunity to play a pregnant, malnourished refugee during the last week's scenarios.

The minehunting fleet which Roebuck leads have waxed and waned over the course of her steady tutelage, swelling up to nine and dropping down to four as the ships of the various NATO nations have served their time in the force.

When Roebuck hands over her flagship laurels in January in Denmark, she will be on her fourth British minehunter, not to mention the rotating ships of the Germans, Belgians, Danes, Dutch, Estonians, Latvians, Norwegians, Italians...

Roebuck's commanding officer Lt Cdr Matt Syrett commented: "By the time we finish this we

will have worked with 18 MCMs from other nations – we have been the constant throughout."

Currently all four NATO groups have been pulled together for Exercise Noble Midas, stepping in to protect the people of the fictional island Ezir from its sparring nations of Northland and Westland and the rebel insurgent Jumblez who seek to spark the flames of conflict once more.

The two larger NATO groups (among which sails British frigate HMS Cumberland) are positioned in reality in the deep seas of the mid Mediterranean some way to the south of the minehunter groups off the Grecian coastline who need the reality of seabed for the fiction of their minehunting, although for the exercise the scenario plays out as if all four groups are cheek by jowl.

This is, in fact, the accreditation exercise for the other minehunters in Group 2, under the command of the German Navy; Roebuck had to contend with her own exam conditions months earlier as part of Exercise Loyal Mariner.

Group 1 is in the supporting role, with five MCMs from the UK, Belgium, Estonia, Norway and Germany.

Cdr Chris Davies, the Royal Navy officer who is head of the minehunting Group 1, said: "You need to exercise in the types of environment and conditions that you expect to fight in."

"If you don't train as you mean to fight, you will run into problems when you least need them."

It's a blunt fact: the seas are still awash with historic ordnance, and it doesn't take much to add some fresh dangers to the globe's waters.

Cdr Davies said: "The mine is a cheap and effective weapon. Once laid, they never sleep."

It is well known to readers of this paper that the seabed around the UK is littered with the historic ordnance of World Wars 1 and 2.

Similarly past conflicts have scarred the waters of the northern and southern Europe, forging NATO's minehunting group that has grown with new members as more nations such as Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia have joined their ships to the force.

"NATO is keen that contribut-

ing nations get some real benefit out of their commitment," said Cdr Davies.

By the time this is published, Group 1 will be on its third period of historic ordnance disposal operations, clearing dangerous wartime relics from off the coast of France. In the spring of this year, some 75 contacts were investigated off the coast of Belgium and the Netherlands, with 18 confirmed as ordnance.

Minehunter HMS Ledbury left the UK in early August and the men on board are looking forward to the chance to bring their skills to bear on the real deal.

Although they're also very grateful for the opportunities they've had to refresh their skills amid the clear, glittering blue of the balmy Mediterranean.

Navigator Sub Lt Rob Garner said with a grin: "After a few weeks of transit, it was good to get back into mine warfare. And doing that in good weather and clear water with lots of pretty girls going past on yachts waving to us."

Ledbury's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Chris Nelson admits: "It's been a brilliant chance to see the guys at work, and see the kit on here working."

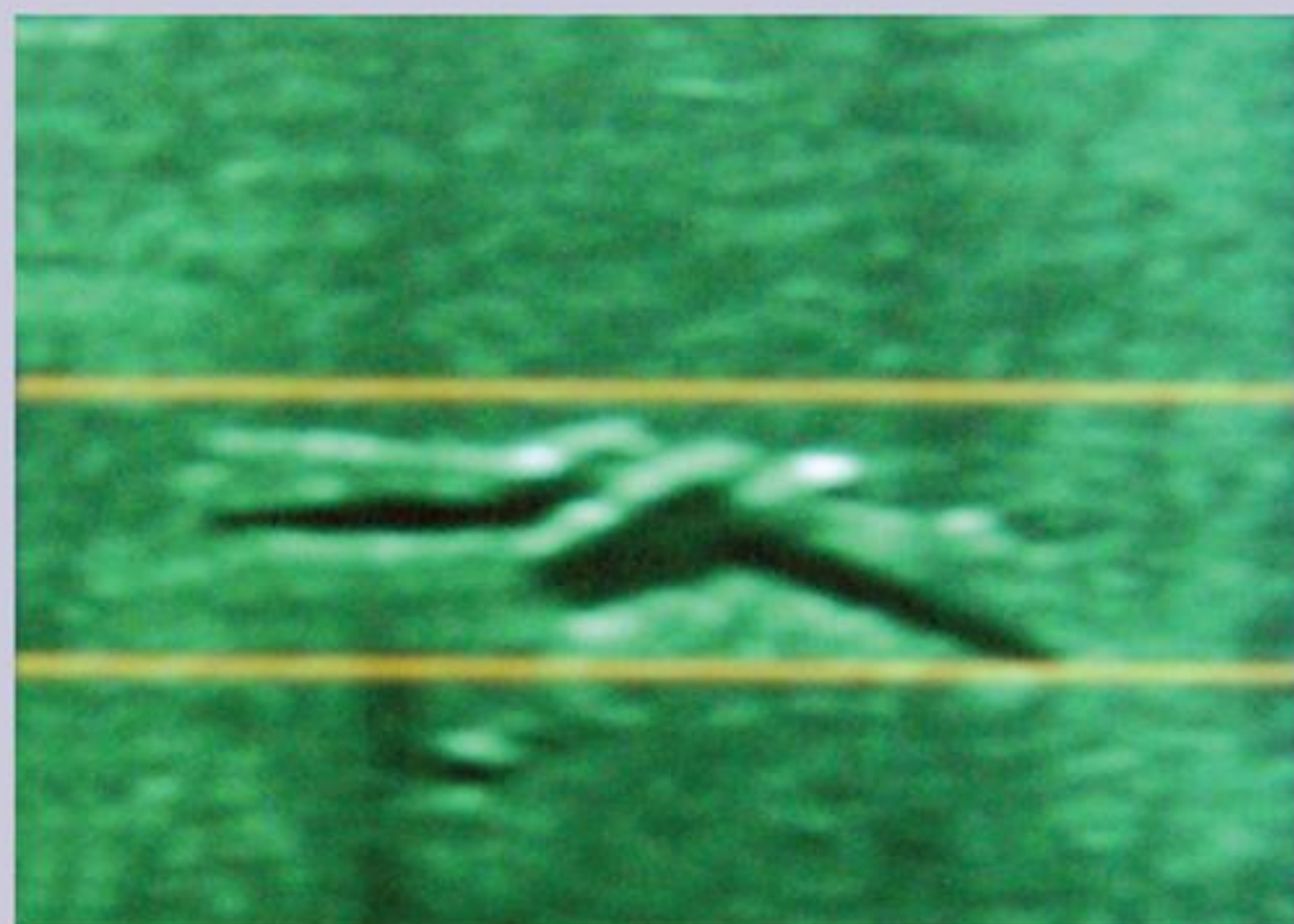
The ship's time at the NATO Underwater Research Centre off Italy's La Spezia saw the crew put through their paces picking up the deliberately scattered dummy ordnance that could be checked against the NATO record.

Lt Cdr Nelson said: "The check on our gear allowed us to go on from La Spezia with a feeling of warmth about what we do."

Ledbury and her associated group joined with the other NATO minehunting group to work off Toulon during Exercise Olives Noires, establishing good relationships between the two groups, and among the international minehunters within.

"There's been a massive amount of ideas that have been swapped among us about how we do our work," said Ledbury's CO. His ship has quickly forged a strong relationship with the German ship within the task group, with the British divers diving on FGS Homberg's contacts.

But it's not just the Germans who have had visits from their British allies. Greece's HS Europa



Pictures: The changing faces of NATO minehunting (main picture and various) ENS Admiral Cowan, HNLMS Urk, ITS Numana, HMS Roebuck, HMS Ledbury, FGS Homburg and BNS Lo





has also had a few from the minehunter on board, an eerily familiar visit to the former Hunt-class HMS Bicester. And the Estonian ENS Admiral Cowan benefited from a few tips on RASing from those who had served on the siblings of the once HMS Sandown.

And there is a real keenness on board among everyone from officers to junior rates to get a chance to see inside the other nations' ships and see the different ways that they do the same job.

Executive Officer Lt Daniel 'Doc' Morris states: "It's been enlightening.

"Every day's a school day – you never stop learning. Between myself and our CPO this morning during our visit to the German ship, we got two new ideas to bring back here."

It's something that CPO Terry 'Basher' Briggs of the battlestaff on board HMS Roebuck has appreciated.

"It's opened my eyes to what other people do.

"The core side of minehunting is very similar. There are slight subtle differences as to how we conduct day-to-day business. It's interesting to integrate with them so that we come to a level where we all have a good understanding of what we do.

"There were some slight teething problems, but they were soon ironed out. We can adapt to learn from their practices, and possibly bring it back to the Royal Navy. It's really worked out well."

Cdr Davies commented: "It's an honour to command a NATO group. We do meet some interesting individuals and see the way our European allies go about solving the same problem – a mine on the seabed.

"They all come with subtly different ways of doing it. This sort of group gives the UK exposure to their methods.

"If one ship doesn't necessarily have the best capability for that particular mine task in those conditions, then someone else has.

"We've had a number of other units attached with differing techniques – a different way to do business.

"It's swings and roundabouts – that's the challenge. It's easy to become slightly myopic in the ways of doing our business.

"But that's the exciting part,

the interesting part and on occasions the challenging part."

He added: "It's been incredibly enjoyable to see the growing capability of the new NATO states, and to see the investment that they are putting into their platforms."

The build-up to Noble Midas has brought its own excitement on board Ledbury. PO 'Ginge' Wilcockson explained: "It was just an accident. I saw a huge contact that we could check our sonar with – and I was interested to see what it was.

"Because of where we were, I thought it might be but I didn't quite believe it."

In the CO's own words when he saw the sonar image: "Bloody hell, it's a plane."

Normally the grainy sonar image, even in the inestimable Sonar 2193 of the Hunt class, is almost impossible to decipher to my inexperienced eyes, but even I can see the shape of the plane found on the seabed of the Bay of Taranto (see picture left).

The minehunter sent down its PAP (yellow submersible) to investigate, and its camera recorded crystal-clear footage of a crashed aeroplane with a fractured tail and broken engines lying upon the seabed, an aircraft believed to be a wartime German bomber.

Coxswain PO Diver Eddie Edmundson led a team down to the wreck, checking for the bombs that defined its role or traces of its aircrew.

He said: "It was interesting. The discovery was uncharted. We had a good look around it and underneath it – there was nothing dangerous or in the cockpit. I've never dived on an old World War 2 plane before."

The discovery has been reported to the Italian authorities, and potentially a new wreck or war-grave will be added to the world's seafaring charts.

Roebuck herself, not quite able to leave her survey hat at home, located a wreck in the tanker anchorages off Lithuania in May, which was a useful piece of new information for the authorities.

And all on board Ledbury are looking forward to the period of live ops coming up, searching the seas off France for the remains of wartime battles.

There's a specific light that

burns in the eyes of the minehunting man at the thought of finding some dangerous relic to blast from the seabed.

CPO Briggs on Roebuck, a minewarfare man through and through, is just the same: "Some of the German mines down there look like they've been lain yesterday. They look brand new."

"To know that we're actually clearing the area, as some of these nations rely so much on tourism, or large ferries and ships going in and out, is so important.

"When we clear the area it gives a real buzz."

This will be the penultimate major act for HMS Roebuck during her long deployment – 11 months of 13 at sea – before a brief return to UK shores, then back to Denmark for the handover ceremony where the lead of the NATO group will be taken by the Danes.

And perhaps a collective sigh of relief will be heard on board the somewhat tired but remarkably cheerful British ship.

Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Matt Syrett pulls no punches: "In terms of this year, it's just been very long, it's just been incredibly long.

"We're just getting to the stage where we've all seen this before. There needs to be a new challenge. We're now not stretched. You could give us an awful lot more and we wouldn't squeal. I don't think Roebuck has said no to anything we've been asked to do this year, we've said: 'we'll give that a go'.

"So in terms of skill fade and the loss of professional survey ability I don't see that as being a great deal of worry because we've just parked it, December 31 last year we got rid of all our survey equipment, notes and capability but we made a clean break of it.

"There's a seed kernel of experience, which is why we found the wreck off Lithuania, but we're all really looking forward to actually building the survey capability again."

The year within NATO has brought a range of new skills to the traditional roles of the

surveyors.

"This is a contingent task, this is a role that Roebuck and the other survey vessels Echo and Enterprise are scoped to perform, but we generally don't end up doing it for a year.

"To be honest we struggled at the beginning of the year because it was so new, but once we'd proven our capability, we've been on top of it for months now," admits Roebuck's CO.

"The ship is in the best material state that she's been in since I joined her. She was due to come out of service in 2003, but because of the Gulf War she was reactivated.

"In terms of operational capability this ship is as good as she's ever been – we're getting loads out of it. While we're not doing our core role – and we won't have surveyed for 18 months by the time we get back to it so it's going to be a hell of a challenge there – what we're seeing is much more dynamism in terms of leadership, really adept use of seamanship drills, we're growing and increasing our flexibility.

"My ship's company have done remarkably well. The junior rates have always been a key strength of Roebuck – they're the heart and soul of this unit. And at times we've had to endure a number of fast-moving changes.

"But I have a happy ship's company, and we've all worked bloody hard to achieve that.

"One of my able seamen before this deployment had never gone further east than Ostend nor west than Brest, never done action stations, and had never done a RAS. Well, he's now gone everywhere between Norway, Lithuania and Greece – some really outstanding visits."

Lt Cdr Syrett leans back and sums up his ship's NATO deployment with a smile: "Every time divers go down on our hull, they remark how clean it is. The reason why it's clean is because we haven't stopped all year.

"It's bloody hard for barnacles to grow on your hull if you don't stop long enough for them to cling on."



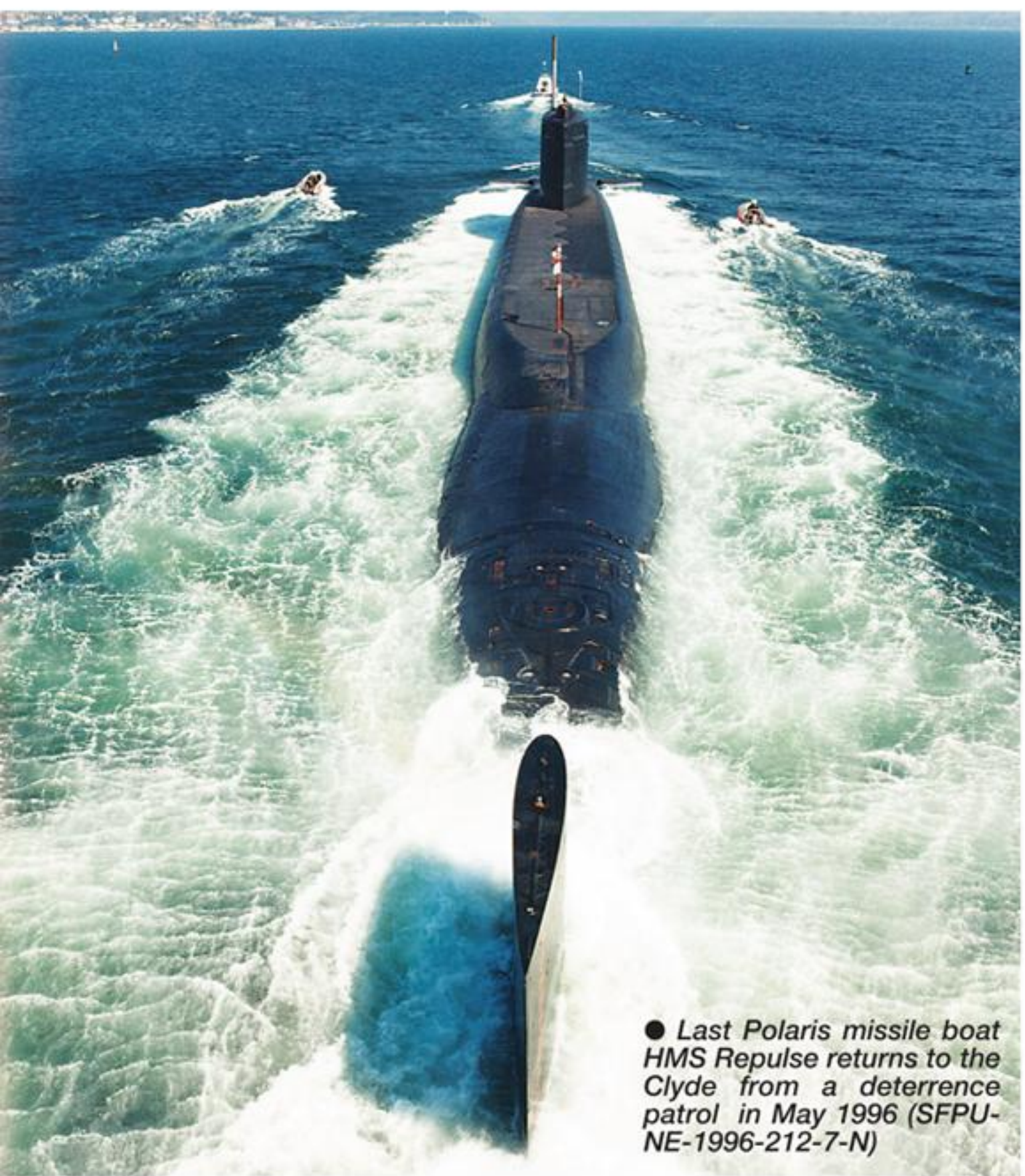




● Men of the 1st Royal Naval Brigade toss snow balls at an internment camp in Holland in November 1914 (Q53443) and (left) Royal Marines fill water bottles near Ostend in August 1914 (Q53230)



# Photographic memories



● Last Polaris missile boat HMS Repulse returns to the Clyde from a deterrence patrol in May 1996 (SFPUN-1996-212-7-N)

**M**ORE than nine decades after his death, the idealistic words of S/Lt Rupert Brooke still inspire.

Brooke died two days before Commonwealth forces stormed the shores of Gallipoli.

And it was there, in the bloody spring of 1915, that a near namesake left Britons with a more tangible, more realistic keepsake of war.

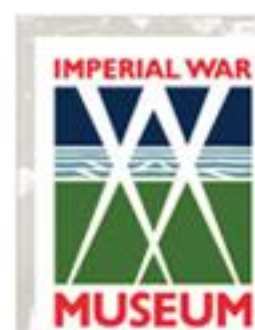
The name of Lt Ernest Brooks has faded with the passage of time. But not his work. It lives on in books, in documentaries, and in the day-to-day work of 21st Century sailors.

For back in 1915, Brooks was selected by the Admiralty to record the great advance on Constantinople.

The great advance faltered, then failed – all recorded by the camera of Brooks, Britain's first official photographer of the Great War.

What began with Brooks 93 years ago mushroomed in the mud of the Somme and Passchendaele, the sands of North Africa, the grey wastes of the Atlantic, the beaches of Borneo, the dust of Iraq and Afghanistan, more than ten million images of war in total, all held by the Imperial War Museum.

It is held not in the imposing main museum, dominated by two



In the first of a regular series, we dip into the archive of the Imperial War Museum – repository for ten million images of conflict from the Boer War to Iraq and Afghanistan – to give a public airing to unseen images of a century of naval warfare.

15in naval guns, but in a former school/orphanage/hospital behind the principal building.

It is the designated repository for all official images of war – and peace – produced by the three Armed Forces.

Today dedicated photographic branches record daily life in all three Services.

But when the Great War engulfed Europe in 1914, things were rather more haphazard.

There were no British official photographers in 1914; battalions employed officers or made use of personal cameras, while cameramen working for newspapers and agencies, or freelancers sold their images in stores.

By today's standards, it seems rather macabre that shops did a lively trade in images of the battlefields and the men fighting there, but there was an insatiable appetite for news – and especially photographs – from the front.

Former *Daily Mirror* photographer Ernest Brooks was the exception, not the rule, employed by an Admiralty who

cared little for the media and even less for photographers.

"Admirals really didn't feel they had to justify the Navy's existence, their attitude to photographers was rather aloof," explained Ian Proctor, one of the IWM's photographic curators.

Aloof or not, the Admiralty sent Brooks to the Dardanelles aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth.

And he obviously impressed: in the spring of 1916, he was employed as Britain's very first official war photographer on the Western Front, documenting the blood of Kitchener's Armies.

The government wanted to project images of a victorious volunteer army at home and abroad.

It got its images – the very first in the series, Q1, is the famous (and much-used) shot of a ration party of the Royal Irish Rifles resting in a communications trench on July 1 1916, the first day of the Somme – but it didn't get its victory.

And so the photographers continued their work.

Q1 would be followed by more than 40,000 other official images,

taken by the small band of official cameramen who joined Brooks. (Brooks himself alternated between the Army and Navy for the rest of the war, producing some of the most iconic images of the Great War.)

All had a singular aim.

"British photographs of the war are principally aimed at public consumption at home and abroad," explained Mr Proctor.

"The Australians documented every facet of the war – they wanted to create a historical record. And the Canadians seemed rather more keen to show the horrors of war."

What you will not find among British WW1 imagery are many photographs of the dead, friend especially, but also foe – public sensibilities in what was still essentially Edwardian Britain were not ready for the reality of war.

And you won't find too many images of the Royal Navy in action either.

The great distances at which castles of steel grappled with each other, coupled with the length of time it took to take a photograph with the cameras of the day, made capturing the naval war tricky.

And so most of our images of the Grand Fleet in the Great War are devoted to life aboard ships, vessels sailing into and out of harbours, or on exercises around the UK.

Photographs from the 'front line' are rare – and many were apparently taken by ship's



● Gurkhas from Kluang and men from RNAS Sembawang haul a Westland Whirlwind out of a swamp near Layang Layang in May 1955 (A33203) and (left) Have a nice can of drink and a sit down... a member of HMS Cardiff's flight deck party takes a break after a Sea Skua has been loaded on to the destroyer's Lynx in the Falklands (FKD89)







● Flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth and a line of dreadnoughts – photographed from a naval airship – sail to meet the High Seas Fleet on November 21 1918 (Q20616)

surgeons; Surgeon Oscar Parkes alone took or collected more than 3,000 photographs of the RN and donated them to the museum – they formed the kernel of the IWM's naval collection.

Then again photographs from the front line on land are also pretty rare; there are plenty of shots from the rear lines, but there are very few images of troops going 'over the top': setting up a camera and tripod in the heat of battle on the Western Front was pretty much suicidal.

How things had changed a generation later when the Senior Service faced its greatest test of arms.

By then, the RN had its own photographic branch (formed in 1919 for reconnaissance and intelligence purposes, although the 'photos' developed a sideline in 'rabbit work', producing pictures for their shipmates to snap up).

It wasn't merely attitudes within the Navy to photography which had changed. Attitudes without, in British society, had changed too.

"In World War 1, naval photographs are for the most part captioned only with the names of senior officers," explained Mr Proctor. "By World War 2, often you will find people named, their address, the address of their parents."

And by World War 2, cameras

were much more affordable to the ordinary sailor and marine – which means a plethora of images.

With the wartime generation fading away, many of their families look for a suitable home for their photograph albums.

Some choose to sell the images on eBay, most prefer to altruistically donate the albums to the nation via the museum.

"We have to be selective – a group shot of three sailors is not especially interesting, unless there's a story behind it, or an unusual trade behind it," said Mr Proctor.

"Sometimes we have to say 'No'. We do not have the space for duplicate images, and a ship's photographer would often make numerous copies of his work, selling them to his shipmates."

For every duplicate, however, there is a hidden gem: a cutter from HMS Bulldog rowing towards a half-submerged U110.

It looks, of course, like many images from the Battle of the Atlantic. Context is everything: the men are about to seize an Enigma machine and change the direction of the war.

And thankfully, context is available for most images. Photographers in bygone years filled in detailed caption sheets

(in the Navy's case the rather long-winded Official Admiralty Photographer's Return).

The Ministry of Information kept a comprehensive cuttings library, so in many cases you can track down where the pictures were used. And for some units, not only the captions exist but also the re-writes by unit press officers and by the official censors, allowing present-day historians to study the art of censorship.

And sometimes captions are incomplete. Collections are often donated to the museum with few, if any details, supplied.

"All you need is for that first caption to be written incorrectly, and it can go down in history incorrectly," Mr Proctor warned.

"The museum has an international reputation – we have to protect historical integrity and the integrity of the museum."

And, one might add, the integrity of the original images. Almost all official photographs from the two world wars are on glass plate negatives (private photographers preferred film); post-war there are thousands of film negatives and prints. All are held in acid-free containers in environmentally-controlled storerooms and vaults.

Even with such care, images can deteriorate; some taken less than 30 years ago have faded away,

Continued on page 40

● Death of a U-boat... The men of 'Johnny' Walker's HMS Starling launch depth charges in the Atlantic in February 1944. Starling's group claimed six German submarines during the patrol (A22031)



● Tot time aboard a British battleship – most probably HMS King George V – in 1940 (A1777)

● LA(Phot) B Chilton and PO(Phot) P Johnson load an aerial camera on to a Sea Fury aboard HMS Ocean off Korea, September 1952 (A32366)



● Ground crew at RNAS Yeovilton refuel Supermarine Seafire X4652 in September 1943 (TR1275)





## Pressure on submariner training?

IS IT true the RN is thinking of closing the escape tank in Portsmouth?

I think it is terrible for future submariners not to be trained in escape procedures – my uncle, son and son-in-law have had this experience, and I can sleep at night knowing at least they have a chance to escape if needed.

– Anne Williams, Buckley, Flintshire, N Wales

THERE is a story going the rounds among various branches of the Submariners' Association that escape training is being brought to a close, for cost reasons.

If this is true, the lives of British submariners will be put at risk.

I know there are now the deep vessels that can attach to a sunken submarine to rescue the crew, but what happens if the boat is on the bottom, or part of the boat is flooded?

As with HMS Truculent, she had various flooded compartments and an immediate escape was thus necessary, only to have some survivors lost in the tidal currents.

With a flooded boat on the bottom, it is expected that an immediate escape attempt would be made, thus reducing the time spent under pressure.

– John Belton-Perkin, Bodmin, Cornwall

An RN spokesman told Navy News: "It is true that pressurised ascent training has been suspended at the SETT (Submarine Escape Training Tank).

"This decision has no impact on the safety or the operational capability of the submarine fleet and was not taken as a cost saving measure.

"Indeed, all other aspects of submarine training are being delivered in full at the relevant training establishments.

"The decision was taken by CinC as a result of a review of the RN's current training needs in light of the modern technology and rescue methods that are now available.

"The RN is reviewing whether this training will be necessary in the future and no decision has yet been taken. The emphasis nowadays is on rescue rather than escape." – Ed

## Surface rust

I IMAGINE a fair proportion of your ex-Service readers will have been puzzled by the apparent lack of paint and rusty condition on the upper deck of HMS Iron Duke on your front page (October).

Is this a new maintenance policy, or have the paint manufacturers stopped producing Brunswick Green?

– Wilf Diggle, Larne, Co. Antrim

We had a few inquiries from readers asking about the brownish upper decks – some thought it was rust, others assumed the ship had been through a sandstorm.

When we rang HMS Iron Duke, her PRO confirmed that it was definitely rust – the ship had been at sea for three weeks and through two Force 11 gales – Ed

# When the Queen got a bit too close

NEWS OF the Navy honouring the Queen Elizabeth 2 with HMS Manchester escorting brought back vivid memories of the last time those two ships were in close proximity.

In summer 2000, after completing a very successful APT(N) deployment to the Caribbean, the 'Mighty Manchester' took part in the US Navy Fleet Week in New York. We were given a prize slot inboard at one of the cruise liner terminals with the Japanese Naval Ship Kashima berthed alongside us.

One morning as I was finishing breakfast and contemplating the day ahead there was a knock at my cabin door: "XO's compliments, Sir, the QE2 is in sight and will berth opposite us soon. He thought you might like to come down and see."

In my best uniform ready for the day's events I slipped my ceremonial telescope under my arm, donned my better cap and strode down to the upper deck and up onto the fo'c'sle.

Stepping out from under the awning I was greeted with a sight that no CO would ever want to see. The view was blocked by the vast blue hull of the great liner, rapidly advancing down on the tide on to Kashima and Manchester.

Collision was inevitable and sure enough the huge vessel lent beam on to the bows of the Japanese ship, with a cacophony of crunching noises.

Her weight on the bows of Kashima and Manchester had a predictable result – all our after lines quickly parted, stern ropes, back springs, breasts and all, with impressive bangs, and the gangway fell into the water with a resounding splash.

Both watches of the ops department, mustering on the flight deck, scattered in all directions and the final trickle of liberty men returning to both ships fled rapidly from the brow. Amazingly no one was hurt.

## Any survivors out there?

ON CHRISTMAS Day in 1941, Hong Kong Island surrendered to the Japanese.

My late grandfather, Leslie Barker, escaped with the rest of the 2nd Motor Torpedo Boat (MTB) Flotilla and kept a diary whilst he was smuggled through China by guerillas and a one-legged Chinese Admiral called Chan Chak who was later awarded a KBE for his efforts.

When grandad died, I found his diary, transcribed it, and in the spring of 2008, used it as my travel itinerary to retrace his steps through China as far as the Burmese border. His route continued into Burma, then India before eventually catching a boat home in March 1942.



● The QE2 keeps a safe distance (this time) from HMS Manchester  
Picture: WO1 Ian Arthur, FRPU Clyde

Forcibly sprung out about 45 degrees from the jetty, we set about recovering as the liner was hauled off and put alongside her proper berth.

New lines were sent ashore and the two ships hauled back alongside. The gangway was recovered and the ship's company went back about their normal business.

No sooner were the telephones reconnected than I had my first call – from Fleet HQ asking me to explain how I had crashed HMS Manchester into the QE2...

I sent XO to the liner to invite

their Captain onboard so that we could both go and call and pay our respects to the Japanese Admiral and Captain of Kashima.

As damage to all ships was limited to a little loss of paintwork and a couple of bent guard-rails we celebrated with Japanese hospitality and a stand-easy tot of saki.

QE2 then barely had time to host a lunchtime buffet for the Manchester and Kashima officers before stealing away on the evening tide.

– Capt Bob Brown, Navy Command HQ

## Long wait for medals

THE PHOTOGRAPH (right) shows my grandson receiving the Pingat Jasa Malaysia medal for me.

I was one of 250 in the morning session at the Royal Armouries in Leeds, and there were a further 250 in the afternoon in March this year.

It was organised by the Manchester branch of the Malaysia Veterans Association I believe.

The medal has now been passed to my eldest son, a serving CPO on the Westminster, who is waiting to hear if he can wear it on ceremonial occasions.

– Robert Field, Leeds

FURTHER to the letter regarding the non-issue of the medal, (September) I also applied to the secretary of the Malaya and Borneo Veterans' Association over two-and-a-half years ago and since then have made a number of telephone calls to both the Malaysian Embassy and the secretary of the M&BVA to no avail.

I served in HMS Lincoln from 1962 to 1963 and spent quite a bit of time in and off Borneo.

– David E Smith, Alfreton, Derbyshire

THERE are three of us here in Waterford who qualified. We contacted the association and got nowhere, in most cases not even an acknowledgment of our letters, and I think that applies to everyone in the Irish Republic.

Two of us received ours through the Ton-Class Association, so I would suggest the person in France try some other organisation.

– Dominic Dunne, Waterford, Eire

I TOO am still waiting for my medal. In the early stages I received correspondence from an Army gunner who seemed to be doing some of the organising, but he appeared to be snowed under by the number of claimants.

'Old ships' from Bulwark days have informed me that their medals were received over a year ago. The old tale about medals coming up with the rations may apply

## Not the original Unicorn

I WAS very interested to see the report on HMS Unicorn (October) with three wonderful views of the ship's figurehead.

The figurehead was not the original I am sorry to say, as a vessel that went into the ordinary, she did not have a figurehead when built.

This is a replica carved a few years ago, in fact I think they have three in total, the wooden one carved by Trevor Ellis, plus two fibreglass replicas, one on the bow and one in store, so that when they take one off they can put one back.

– Richard Hunter, Figurehead Historian, Aughton, Sheffield

FOR years, schoolfriends and I used to go across to Dundee and visit the old swimming baths, alongside of which was moored the Unicorn.

Only it wasn't the Unicorn then, it was the Cressy. Many years later, the cause of the name



here, South Africa and France being a bit further down the line!

– Dave Harding, Swellendam, Western Cape, South Africa

TWO years ago, in my capacity as Welfare Officer, RNA Cape Town, I submitted a block application for eight of our members who qualified.

To date not a word, despite follow-up letters to High Commissions in both London and Pretoria. Our oldest claimant has now turned 80 and, like the rest of us, would very much like to see what this medal looks like!

– Peter Turton, Cape Town

I APPLIED two-and-a-half years ago but have not received any reply.

I was an Ordnance Artificer (Weapons) and received the GSM with Malay Peninsula Clasp.

I am now nearing my 72nd birthday so I hope I hear something soon. If Ted Fitzsimmons reads this, we were in the same boat.

– M J Dack, Barrow-in-Furness

TO WARRANT a presentation a large number of recipients are required for the Malaysian defence representative to travel to make that presentation.

There are many former servicemen in the Portsmouth area, so I imagine if you live in a remote area it will take much longer to muster enough men to receive it – but you will eventually receive it.

– Tony Wilkes, Cosham, Portsmouth

## opinion

THERE was a time when the Royal Navy was given a free hand to clear the seas of pirates and slave ships, and when a ship's captain could hang pirates at the yardarm.

Such independence of action, not to mention the summary punishment which followed, is no longer fitting in a modern and arguably more civilised world.

But piracy is a growing scourge which threatens the sea trade on which our nation and many others depend for their food, fuel, goods and ultimate prosperity.

So it is good news that HMS Northumberland, currently operating in a combined task force in the Gulf of Aden, has been given additional authority to take a stronger line

The views expressed in Navy News do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry of Defence

against pirates.

This more robust response includes allowing her to confiscate and destroy pirate equipment. It is a good start and may be followed by more forceful action once the UN, NATO, and the EU have debated the moral and legislative problems of dealing with captured pirates.

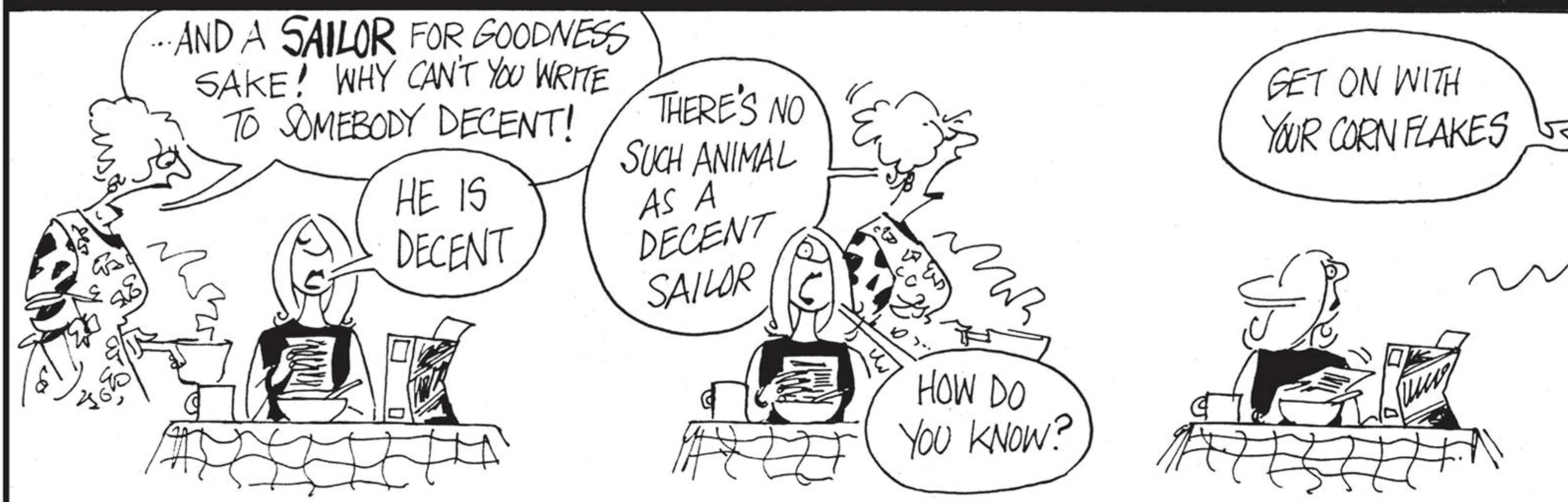
There is no doubt that most of the British public would support a stronger line against pirates. Indeed, if the RN does not do something to tackle them, they may well begin to ask what exactly is the Navy for?

For the Navy's part, there is no lack of will, nor of capability – all it needs is the clear mandate to do the job.



CLASSIC  
**JACK**

BY TUGS



# Hood's fine example

I HAVE been ill and must have missed Professor Grove's rather jaundiced review of Dr Bruce Taylor's magnificent work *The Battlecruiser HMS Hood* (July).

There are several incidents in my time in the Navy where 'jaundiced' could be justly applied to my views on naval matters.

But I am rather at a loss to identify which particular quotations in Dr Taylor's great work have offended the good Professor.

You kindly sent me Professor Grove's article and suggested I should comment on Hood's destruction and give my views as to whether she was 'a happy ship'.

Whatever criticisms historians may level at their work, together Dr Taylor and Nixie Taverner in *Hood's Legacy* have put together a fine written memorial to an old ship, manned at her ending by a largely worn-out ship's company.

Their faithfulness to make the best of her unmodernised age and to serve their country should be an example and a lesson to succeeding generations, not only of ship's companies, but to those who have the ordering of the Fleet – politicians and chiefs of staff.

Those who manned her were typical of a Navy which grew tenfold from its 75,000 and yet, like the other two Services and the civilian population, remained invincible, while civilisation was threatened and other nations stumbled...

– Louis le Bailly, St Tudy, Bodmin, Cornwall  
Vice Admiral Louis le Bailly's thoughts on HMS Hood can be found on the Navy News' website, [www.navynews.co.uk](http://www.navynews.co.uk), under the Letters section. MAY I be allowed a very short reply to the critical letters (August)?

Mr French is fully entitled to disagree with me 'on events in 1940' or our 'laughable theory' on how Hood was lost – although I would like to see his counter-evidence.

I agree, however, with his views that Hood was not in a 'pitiful state' and do not consider him at all 'arrogant' or 'self-opinionated' in taking such a view, although it is contrary to Bruce Taylor's.

As for Mr Mantle, his memory is at fault. I have never referred anywhere to Hood's non-existent aircraft spotting for her in the Denmark Strait, and certainly not on the Channel 4 TV programme on Hood and Bismarck with which I was involved.

– Eric Grove, University of Salford

PROFESSOR GROVE states that his homespun theory on the loss of HMS Hood was accepted by 'almost all my colleagues on the expedition that found and

examined' the wreck in 2001.

He omits to say that among the dissenting voices was the expedition's only qualified forensic expert, Bill Jurens of the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers.

Readers may like to know that analysis of available footage of the wreck published in 2002 by Jurens and a panel of experts has discarded in scientific terms what commonsense should never have entertained.

Professor Grove's absurd cul-de-sac continues to obscure the long-awaited exploration of precisely how the ship was destroyed, for which sufficient material apparently exists on film.

Moving on, no one who actually troubles to read the book will be left in much doubt that she was a "happy ship" for most of her career.

That said, there were times when she was less than happy and the irrefutable evidence of those who served in her is that the winter of 1940–41 was one of those times.

– Dr Bruce Taylor Los Angeles, California

ON September 4 the Fred Olsen cruise ship Boudicca halted her journey from Iceland to Greenland in the Denmark Strait to remember and pay respect to the officers and crew of HMS Hood.

The starting point for this memorial service was a conversation between a passenger and a military historian who was a guest lecturer.

The passenger, realising the Boudicca would sail close to where his father had lost his life in HMS Hood, asked the historian if he could tell him when they were at the nearest point to the ship.

This question eventually arrived with the captain, Bjarne Larsen, formerly of the Royal Danish Navy, who checked his planned course and found he would be within 50nm of the wreck site.

He changed course to pass over the site and gave instructions for a memorial service to be held when they reached it.

At 1145 on the Thursday morning Boudicca stopped her engines and a large number of the passengers and most of the ship's officers gathered for the service.

I thought your readers would like to know that this happened.

– Geoff Woodward

See page 34 for more about the service, and Ted Briggs, the last survivor – Ed

ASTERN of HMS Hood in your picture on page 28 (September) is a carrier which looks like one of the early conversions from a merchantman, maybe Hermes or Courageous. Can anyone identify her?

– Dave Harding

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E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for

us to publish it.

Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in Navy News.

We do, however, publish many on our website, [www.navynews.co.uk](http://www.navynews.co.uk), accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.



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● Two huge clouds of smoke on the left of the picture mark the end of HMS Hood, while German shells crash down around HMS Prince of Wales – as seen from the cruiser Prinz Eugen





## 'ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY'

### Aquitaine consider Nelson – the man

AQUITAINE branch held its annual Nelson Lunch last month, at which the deputy defence attaché in Paris, Capt Phil Stonor, was guest speaker.

More than 90 shipmates and partners welcomed *amis de bord* (French shipmates) from six local *amicales* (branches) of AMMAC, the French equivalent of the RNA. *Les amicales* have invited their British shipmates to events throughout the year, ranging from parading the standard at Liberation Day parades to excellent lunches.

Capt Stonor spoke in English and French on 'Nelson the man', quoting from Nelson's Trafalgar Prayer, when he prayed for victory for Europe, and looked for compassion and support for the defeated French after the successful battle.

### Stalwart lost

HAVANT branch has lost a stalwart with the death of founder member S/M Derek Kennard.

S/M Derek served 43 years in the Navy, latterly as a chief writer and warrant officer, and his shipmates felt that made him ideally suited to the role of branch secretary.

Branch treasurer S/M Woodward said: "Derek was a kind and generous member of the branch and a gentleman in every sense of the word."

"He was an enthusiastic member with a great sense of humour."

# Two reasons for one great event

ISLE of Sheppey branch had two good reasons to hold a band concert and parade of standards.

The first was to celebrate Nelson's 250th birthday.

But secondly, and just as importantly, was the chance to raise funds for Headley Court – which they did to the tune of more than £1,000.

On the day, 16 standards were paraded – the Area 2 standard, paraded by S/M Steve Susans of Bromley branch, 11 branch standards from Area 2, three ship associations (those of the Bulwark, Albion and Centaur, HMS Phoebe and HMS Cavalier) and the Merchant Navy was also represented.

The whole affair was ably controlled and directed by S/M Chris Durban, Area 2 Parade and Ceremonial Officer.

Guests included ten members of Pembroke House and five Chelsea Pensioners.

Nearly 200 people, most of them locals, turned up to watch proceedings, including a particularly impressive turn-out by Chatham branch.

Well to the fore were the band of the Sea Cadets of Whitstable unit, who staged a half-hour performance which moved many to tears.



● Standard bearers gather for the parade organised by the Isle of Sheppey branch

Sheppey branch president S/M Mick Withington said: "They were so professional and dedicated and a credit to our uniform."

"They had actually made a dash from the Lord Lieutenant of Kent's 100th Remembrance Parade for the TA in Canterbury that morning."

Also entertaining the guests was the Snowdon Colliery Welfare Brass Band, which numbers a few former Royal Marines bandmen

from the old School of Music in Deal in its ranks.

During the course of the event a plate buffet was served, and the whole evening was rounded off with the singing of wartime songs, led by the ladies of Memory Lane.

Isle of Sheppey branch was most grateful for the support which the event received – some people had travelled some distance to take part.

## Good job is rewarded

WE reported in our June issue on the unveiling of a memorial to Lt Humphrey Firman VC, killed in action in the SS Julnar on the River Tigris in Mesopotamia (now Iraq) on April 24 1916.

The hard work for the ceremony at New Malden was largely due to S/M John Snowdon, of Crieff and District branch, and that work earned S/M John a certificate of appreciation, which was presented to him by the chairman of No 1 Area, S/M Alan Robinson.

## Young and fit – or old and confused?

FOLLOWING on from a recently-held Veterans Awareness Day, members of Norwich branch formed a team of school speakers.

The team has already visited two junior schools in the city, with more planned for next term.

Year 6 at both schools – that's ten and eleven-year-olds – enjoyed a series of individual experiences related by the veterans, followed by a questions and answers session in the style of the BBC *Any Questions* radio programme.

The team consisted of two World War 2 veterans and three veterans who were boy entrants immediately after the war.

There was not too much emphasis on the war, but a more humorous take on life at sea during and after the war.

Items of memorabilia were shown, as were two DVDs from the MOD Veterans Unit.

The whole event took up two hours and was conducted as part of the youngsters' World War 2 history syllabus.

The visitors also asked the pupils

to write an essay on what they had learned and presented prizes to the best three in each school.

The visits were deemed an outstanding success, with the team being invited back, and news has spread to other schools.

Branch secretary S/M Ken Baish said: "We found that we had explained the role of the veteran to 90 children on each occasion who took the message to 90 sets of parents."

One 11-year-old wrote: "A lot of people consider veterans to be old, confused people who stutter and have glasses."

"However, as the video proved, not all veterans are like that."

"Not all veterans are old and confused, a lot are young and fit."

"The image of veterans is completely wrong."

As S/M Ken said: "Which one do you fit, shipmate – young and fit or old and confused?"

He has also written to the MOD about the visits, which the branch found created more of a splash about veterans than did



## 70 years and counting

CHELMSFORD branch has celebrated 70 years since its foundation.

Members gathered for a service in St John's Church in the town at which the Mayor and Mayoress, Cllr Tom and Jane Willis, were guests.

The Rev Keith Magee led the service, during which the branch standard was rededicated.

The honour of bearing the standard went to S/M Jack

Cann, and alongside him were the standards of the Chelmsford branches of the RMA, the RAFA and the RBL, while the Maldon branch standard was also paraded.

Afterwards members and guests were entertained at the RBL, where they had the chance to look through a book, compiled by Mrs Gamlin, recording members' service and events affecting the branch over the years.

## Hood memorial to be unveiled

AS *Navy News* went to press members of the HMS Hood Association were due to gather at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire for the dedication of a new memorial to the ship.

The polished grey granite stone, bearing a bronze crest, will be a lasting tribute to the 1,415 men who died when the battlecruiser was sunk in the Denmark Strait on May 24 1941.

Only three men escaped from the doomed ship, but the last remaining survivor, association president S/M Ted Briggs, died just weeks before the ceremony.

A report on Ted Briggs' funeral at HMS Collingwood can be found on page 34.

## Tribute to 'last destroyer'

THE HMS Aldenham Association, together with the RNA, will be holding a service of remembrance on Sunday December 14 at St John the Baptist church in the village of Aldenham, near Watford.

The service will honour and remember the crew who lost their lives when the Hunt-class warship

was mined and sunk in the Adriatic – the last RN destroyer to be sunk in World War 2.

The day is particularly appropriate as the ship was lost on December 14 1944 to a mine.

Friends and relatives who wish to attend are invited to contact association secretary S/M John Carder at [johned.carder@ntlworld.com](mailto:johned.carder@ntlworld.com)

## Heroes helped

EAST Grinstead branch, assisted by members of the local ex-Services Club, have raised around £3,500 through a Help for Heroes fundraising weekend.

A raffle, auction of promises, disco and donations helped swell the total – as did a club swear box.

The branch also sent small parcels to members of 3 Para serving in Afghanistan after the son of one member noticed some of his colleagues were not receiving much support from home.

He sent their names back to the UK and each received a parcel.

The most popular items in the parcels turned out to be water pistols...



● S/M Gordon Witton (left), chairman of Bloxwich branch, presents the cheque for £10,000 to John Thompson of the RNBT

## RNBT given donation

WHEN Bloxwich branch had to sell their premises, as membership was declining and the costs of maintaining the club were proving to be too high, a meeting was held to decide what to do with the proceeds of the sale.

Branch president Ken Marham, chairman Gordon Witton, secretary Len Wood and treasurer Ray Birch, plus other club members, decided they would make donations to other charities that help their members.

And they decided that the best way to achieve that aim was

through the RNBT, which was promptly presented with a cheque for £10,000.

The Trust's vice president, John Thompson, executive assistant Lyn Gannon and trustee Julie Halford attended an enjoyable social evening at Colebatches Club, in Walsall, to be presented with the donation.

S/M Gordon Witton said that the RNBT had been the first choice from all the members, because the Trust supports so many of the ex-Royal Naval community.



● Poppy wreaths adorn the site of the St Vincent Association memorial plaque

## St Vincent plaque is rededicated

TWENTY members of the St Vincent Association, along with relatives and friends, gathered at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas to rededicate their memorial plaque.

The original plaque had become tarnished and members decided that it needed to be replaced.

HMS St Vincent, and now the association, enjoyed close links with the town of Stone in Staffordshire, where the remains of Admiral Sir John Jervis, Earl St

Vincent, now lie in the mausoleum at St Michael's Church.

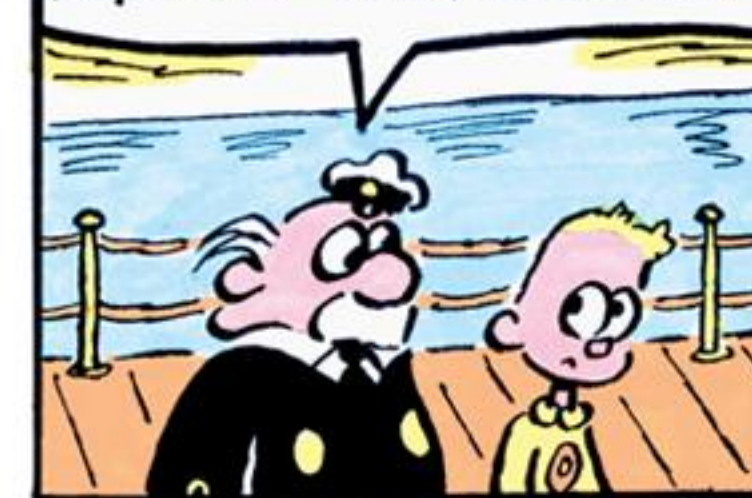
The admiral was born in nearby Meaford.

Among the guests were the Mayor and Mayoress of Stone, Cllrs Mark and Kristian Green, along with a number of town councillors.

The Act of Remembrance and Dedication was held at the site of the memorial and conducted by association chairman S/M Malcolm Smith.

## Naval Quirks

WITHOUT DOUBT, THE MOST "AGAINST THE ODDS" SEA BATTLE TOOK PLACE IN 1591 OFF THE AZORES..



..WHEN SIR RICHARD GRENVILLE'S "REVENGE" TOOK ON A SPANISH FLEET OF 53 SHIPS!



FOR 15 HOURS THE BRAVE BUT SOMEWHAT ARROGANT GRENVILLE FOUGHT, SINKING 2 SPANIARDS BEFORE FINALLY SUCCEEDING..



Sir, surely this battle is too unequal? I agree – blindfold our gunners to even it up!





## Ten men escaped Kite, not nine...

ROD Wells has written to us in response to the report on the tribute plaque to HMS Kite, as printed in the September edition of *Navy News*.

A plaque was unveiled in Essex bearing the names of the 217 men who died when Kite was torpedoed on a Russian convoy in 1944, and our information was that two of the nine survivors of the sinking attended.

Not so, said Mr Wells – one man cheated death and the official records.

"There were, in fact, ten survivors; my late friend John Taylor also escaped the sinking," said Mr Wells.

"He was officially reported missing, but eventually returned to Britain in a USAAF Liberator."

"He said it was a far hairier ride than any on the North Atlantic convoy run."

## Close call for veterans

FOUR survivors of the sinking of HMS Exeter at the Second Battle of the Java Sea were guests of the Royal Navy for a memorial service in the far East – but nearly missed the boat.

S/M Bill Francis, of Newport branch, and his three companions were delayed on a flight to Amsterdam and missed their connecting flight to Singapore.

Travelling 24 hours later they made it to the jetty with an hour to spare before HMS Kent sailed.

From that point on everything went to plan, and the four veterans were able to pay tribute to their colleagues when Kent was brought to a halt over the wreck of the heavy cruiser almost 100 miles north of Bawean Island.

Around 800 men survived the sinking of the warship on March 1 1942, only to be picked up by Japanese ships and consigned to years of misery as prisoners of war in the hands of the Japanese.



● Members of the HMS Protector Association in Eastbourne

# Bill leads singing at his 108th birthday

FORMER CPO Bill Stone celebrated his 108th birthday at his care home near Wokingham on September 23 by leading the singing at a party with some 70 residents, family and friends.

Local press and TV were there in force to record the event.

Bill, who was born in 1900 near Kingsbridge, Devon, joined the Royal Navy aged 18 at Devonport as a stoker and remained in the Service for the next 27 years.

He left at the end of World War 2 as a chief stoker and settled in Paignton, Devon, with his wife, Lily.

He is believed to be the last RN sailor living in the UK to have served in both world wars.

During his career Bill served in many ships, including HMS Hood when she led the Special Service Squadron 'Empire Cruise' around the world in 1923-24.

In World War 2 his ship, the minesweeper HMS Salamander, took part in the Dunkirk evacuation, making a number of trips to France to rescue soldiers from the beaches.

Later, in 1943, in light cruiser HMS Newfoundland at the Sicily landings, Bill was mentioned in

despatches for his work when the ship was damaged by an Italian torpedo.

In 1986 he and Lily moved to Watlington, in Oxfordshire, to be nearer their daughter and family.

He became an active member of many service organisations, including the High Wycombe branch of the RNA, and was a regular attendee at HMS Hood Association and HMS Newfoundland Association reunions.

After Lily's death in 1995 he continued to live in his own home until a fall in 2006 forced him to move to a care home.

Although age and decreased mobility has curtailed his activities, he continues to enjoy life and remains in good voice – something the chaplain appreciates each Sunday at the care home chapel.

● Bill, seated, with local RNA shipmates (from left), Reg Stokoe, Tony Toms and Bert Bargeman



## Wartime pilot's next of kin sought

PERSONAL effects of a Naval pilot who died during a wartime exercise have been excavated from the site of the crash – and now the search is on for next of kin.

S/Lt Richard Catlin Scriminger RNVR died at the age of 22 on February 13 1945 when his Corsair fighter JS590 crashed into a field near Charlton Mackrell in Somerset during dogfighting exercises.

S/Lt Scriminger is buried at Scarborough (Manor Road) cemetery, and the wreckage of his plane was excavated under a licence granted in 2007.

Some personal items – a watch

face and a buckle – were recovered, but the hunt is now on for any surviving relatives.

Before joining the Fleet Air Arm in 1944 the pilot served as a Flying Officer with the RAF.

He was the son of Harry and

Ada Scriminger of Scarborough, but a letter to his last known address was unsuccessful.

If anyone can help, contact Deborah Morgan on 01452 712612 ext 7330 or email [jccchistcas1@spva.mod.uk](mailto:jccchistcas1@spva.mod.uk)

## RNA and RNLI join forces

SELSEY branch and the Selsey lifeboat joined forces for an open-air 'service of praise and thanksgiving' on the Lifeboat Green to mark the branch's 30th anniversary.

The service also incorporated the rededication of the two standards. A large contingent from Selsey and other Area 3 branches saw a fine turnout of standards – 18 from the RNA and RBL, plus the Lifeboat standard and those of various Scout and Cub groups.

The parade and service attracted crowds of appreciative onlookers.

# Eastern branch raises standard

MEMBERS of the Eastern Cyprus branch were joined by serving members of the JSSU (Cyprus) at St Patrick's Church at Ayios Nikolaos for the dedication of a newly-bought standard.

The ceremony was conducted by the Rev Eric Freeman, who is also branch padre and president.

Standard bearer was WO1 Simon Joyce, who stood alongside other association representatives and bearers of standards from the island's Western branch, the RAFA, the RE Association, the RBL and the Scouts.

"The dedication is the culmination of more than 18 months hard work in getting the branch off the ground and now cements our identity within the RNA," said branch chairman S/M Eric Hirst.

CPOET(WE) Beeby from JSSU(Cyprus) has been a key figure in maintaining links with the branch since its inception and has obtained permission to hold the branch meetings in the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess.

More than 30 members formed the branch in order to cut down travelling time to Episkopi to the renamed Western branch.



● Standards are paraded at the service of dedication for the Eastern Cyprus branch standard in St Patrick's Church, Ayios Nikolaos

## Arboretum expecting crowds for ceremonies

THE National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire is expecting up to 20,000 people will visit the site during this year's remembrance period.

Remembrance Sunday will offer the chance for families, friends and other visitors to pay personal tributes to those who lost their lives in the service of the country.

Services of remembrance are scheduled for 10.45am and 2.15pm, allowing people to attend other such services in their own local communities.

The gates will open at 9am, and given the large number of visitors anticipated, an overflow park-and-ride scheme costing £2 will operate from nearby Catton Hall once the Arboretum car park is full.

On Armistice Day (Tuesday November 11) the arboretum will be playing a key role in national commemorations for the 90th anniversary of the day which marked the end of World War 1.

The site will be open all day, and a ticket-only service will be held at the Armed Forces Memorial.

General access to the memorial will not be possible until 12.30pm.

● [www.thenma.org.uk](http://www.thenma.org.uk)  
The national commemoration in London will this year focus on the remaining World War 1 veterans, who will lay wreaths as they remember their fallen comrades on Armistice Day.

The short service will be led by the Bishop of the Armed Forces, the Rt Rev David Conner, and it should last around 25 minutes.

The annual act of remembrance will take place on November 9, when the Queen, other members of the Royal Family, senior politicians, military chiefs and Heads of Missions in London will lay wreaths and pay their respects.

The 2008 Devon Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance will be held at the Great Hall of the University of Exeter on Thursday November 6, starting at 7.30pm.

The festival will feature the Royal Marines Band Lympstone.

As well as the victims of the so-called 'war to end all wars', tribute will also be paid to the sacrifices made by members of the British Armed Forces in all conflicts since 1918, including World War 2 and the present conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The evening will include the traditional muster of standards of Legion branches and other ex-Service associations.

## £50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our September edition (right) was HMS Albion, and the current ship which carries her pennant number of R07 is HMS Ark Royal.

She was correctly identified by Mr Oldham of Exmouth, who wins our £50 prize.

This month's ship (above) is pictured from HMS Eagle during a particularly tricky RAS in 1955.

The auxiliary tanker was commissioned in 1946 and served for 20 years before being scrapped in Singapore in 1967.

What is the name of the ship, which we have removed from the picture.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News,



HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving the correct answer will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

Closing date for entries is December 1. More than one entry can be submitted, but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our January edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

### MYSTERY PICTURE 165

Name .....

Address .....

My answer .....





● Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Alan Massey opens the new facility

## New cabins opened for teams at Temeraire

NEW accommodation is open for business at HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth.

It is hoped that the new facility will help maintain opportunities for training and competition as other spare 'transit' accommodation capacity becomes more scarce.

The NSSA (Naval Service Sports Accommodation) will be available to Servicemen and women and personnel who are integral to approved sporting activities and courses.

Some 80 guests attended the opening ceremony; alongside RN staff, sports associations representatives and members of the PT branch were Olympians Lt Peter Reed – who won gold in Beijing – and sailor Lt Cdr Penny Clark, as well as European boxing champion Lt Lucy Abel.

Opening the building, Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Alan Massey said the RN recognised the contribution sport made to morale and operational efficiency, as well as helping develop leadership skills.

Admiral Massey said the four-berth cabins – a total of 60 beds – would enhance existing facilities, giving the best cluster of sports facilities across the Naval Service.

It would also take the pressure off Service accommodation, and meant coaches and tournament organisers could get on with concentrating on the sport itself rather than the administration.

The non-publicly funded facility, built by Rollalong Ltd supported by the RN/RM Sports Lottery, Nuffield Trust and Naval Service Amenities Fund, has been designed in such a way as to allow for the building of a second storey if demand is sufficient and funds can be obtained.

NSSA will only be allocated to recognised Naval Service sports groups, and to other Service personnel who are taking part in a recognised activity.

However, bookings from individuals will not be accepted – the organisation and paperwork must be done by organisers or coaches, with groups nominating an officer-in-charge.

There is no charge for the accommodation – the Sports Lottery will pick up the tab.

For details of availability or further information contact NSSA manager Ian Rees on 023 9286 1860 or email [nssam@btconnect.com](mailto:nssam@btconnect.com)

## It's your 2-6

NEED to get your message across to the rest of the RN?

To feature in 2-6 contact Lt Cdr Gregor Birse (Fleet Media Ops), 93832 8809.



# Forces voters have a choice



MEMBERS of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines are being reminded to make sure they register to vote this autumn through a joint campaign by the Electoral Commission and the Ministry of Defence.

Research has shown that Service personnel are one of the groups that are least likely to be on the electoral register and therefore unable to cast their vote when it comes to election time.

With two planned elections next year and the possibility of a General Election being called at any time, the campaign urges personnel to register now to make sure that they don't miss out on their right to vote.

By the end of this month, 4,000 units in the Armed Forces, including those deployed on operations, will have held an electoral registration day when personnel in the unit will have the opportunity to find out about how to register to vote and register on the spot.

The day will be a focal point of the information campaign which was launched last month with the mailing out of hundreds of thousands of registration forms to Service personnel.

Sqn Ldr Sandy Burton, who is organising a Registration Day at MOD Main Building in Whitehall, said: "Registering to vote is quick and easy, but we recognise that our Services have very little spare time in which to get this done."

"That is why the Government introduced the option to register

as a Service Voter that means our personnel only have to register every three years instead of annually.

"We hope the campaign will provide the opportunity for everyone in the Forces to spend a few minutes of their day finding out about electoral registration and completing the form to secure their vote at election time."

"This will become even more important in light of the European parliamentary elections and the local elections that will be held next year."

Clinton Proud, Head of Campaigns and Public Information at the Electoral Commission, said: "Our campaign is encouraging members of the Armed Forces to make sure they don't lose their chance to have their say."

"We are reminding people in the Forces to make sure they can vote, by making sure their name is on the electoral register and by applying for a postal or proxy vote if they need one."

"As some elections can occur at such short notice it's best to make sure you're registered now."

Service personnel based in the UK can register in the same way as ordinary electors by filling in and returning the annual canvass form that will be coming through your door, while those who are based, or likely to be posted, abroad are advised to register as Service Voters.

More information, and a downloadable registration form, can be found at [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk)



## IC guru dusts off his road atlas

INTERNAL communications policy in the Royal Navy is now the remit of WO1 Baz Cooke – and he is prepared to travel far and wide to help the cause.

WO Cooke's final appointment sees him leave his home in Plymouth to oversee IC policy as part of the Fleet Media team at Leach Building, HMS Excellent.

The new man (pictured above) passionately believes that effective IC is essential in keeping all Naval Service personnel informed and motivated in an age of almost continuous change.

He says that "the most effective message is of no use if it does not reach those it is aimed at, and it is therefore essential that units play a full and active part in ensuring that IC does reach the intended target audience."

Equally, feedback from units allows Navy Command HQ to assess how effective particular messages have been, allowing IC campaigns to be reinforced as necessary.

WO Cooke fully recognises that there is some way to go in ensuring the correct IC message actually reaches its targeted audience, and therefore sees his new role as a transparent customer-based relationship.

Consequently, his intention is to annually visit every unit and establishment where Naval personnel are serving.

WO Cooke views his role as giving as much guidance and support to ships, submarines, establishments and individuals as required.

His continuing aspiration remains to ensure RN people are and remain informed, and looks forward to giving every EWO, Coxswain, Base Warrant Officer and Divisional Officer as much help, assistance and support as required in support of IC.

Promoted WO1 in 1998, WO Cooke's track record leans towards manpower management, and he was the inaugural Warrant Officer of the Waterfront Manning Office.

Holder of an MBE, WO Cooke was EWO in HMS Ocean in 2004 and subsequently worked at FOST.

## Stick to the original badge

CONFUSED by the correct branch badges to be worn by those who came through the WE and ME legacy branches?

CPOWEM(O) Paul Jackson said that after a visit to his local clothing store, and talking to other legacy branch ratings, that seemed to be the case.

"The senior rates of the WEM(R), WEM(O), MEM(L) and MEM(M) specialisations should still be issued and be wearing their original branch badges," said CPO Jackson, the WE Career Manager.

"The new ET(WE)/(ME) badge is only worn by ET ratings and cross-train ratings on completion of their ET course."

"RNTMS 74/06, 234/06 and 159/07 refers."

## Service offers new orisons

A FORCES Prayerline is to be officially launched this month to support members of the Services and their families.

The Prayerline is for any member of the Forces community who would like a personal prayer for themselves, for family or friends.

If someone is going through tough times, if a loved one is ill, if a spouse is about to deploy on operations, or someone is simply worried about the future, the Forces Prayerline may be just the support and encouragement needed.

The service is free and will be manned by trained volunteers from across the UK.

Just phoning 0845 262 7223 will connect the caller to a trained volunteer who will listen, provide encouragement and pray for them.

The line will initially be open seven days a week, during the day and in the evening.

It is totally confidential, and is available to anyone in the Forces community.

However, it is not a counselling or advice service, although volunteers will be able to provide contact details for other welfare services or put people in touch with a local chaplain if they wish.

The service is provided by UCB, who have run a prayerline in the UK and Ireland for some years.

In 2005, UCB responded to a request to provide a prayerline for the Forces community in Germany, accessible to everyone.

UCB are an established UK charity, United Christian Broadcasters, who run a satellite TV channel, five radio and Internet channels, as well as the prayerline.

They have agreed to provide their services free to the military.

The Forces Prayerline aims to enhance the spiritual support provided by the Forces to its community, and is fully endorsed

## FORCES PRAYERLINE

WHEN YOU NEED SOMEONE TO PRAY WITH...

# CALL 0845 26 27 223

UCB UNITED CHRISTIAN BROADCASTERS

by the three Service chaplaincies.

Padre Keith Bretel said: "This initiative is another example of the Christian Church showing that despite so called 'lack of religious relevance' in people's lives, prayer can be a 'power tool' in dealing with, unusual, normal and abnormal circumstances."

"It isn't about props to hold up weak and infirm people, it's about bringing in all our resources to the issues facing us today."

"This is not to be seen as a substitute for personal faith."

"Individuals can still say their own prayers, but sometimes we need some help."



## News and information for serving personnel

### That was what was in it for you

AS PART of MOD DiversityWeek, the RN's Equality and Diversity teams joined forces to organise a drop-in event at Portsmouth Naval Base.

The aim of the day was to raise general awareness about a range of diversity topics including promoting equality of opportunity, the importance of self-declaration on HRMS, the availability of staff networks and diversity groups and to promote the 'disability toolkit for line managers'.

The theme of the event was *What's in it for me?*

More than 140 people came through the doors to seek the answer to that question, and were able to talk to staff from or representing the Pay Personnel and Pensions Agency, Naval Personal Family Services, HIVE, child-care vouchers, unions and DbLearning.

Occupational health officers conducted blood pressure tests on naval base personnel in support of the current *Know Your Numbers* campaign, while other groups gave advice on healthy living and work-life balance.

### New link to Civvy Street

SAILORS will be given the opportunity to demonstrate to civilian managers the business skills which they employ in their Service careers.

A new partnership between the MOD and the Chartered Management Institute will give up to 6,000 Royal Navy and RAF personnel each year access to qualifications and courses which are recognised and sought by employers on Civvy Street.

A similar scheme is already in operation with the Army.

Courses will cover more than 30 areas of training, ranging from change management and team leadership to operational management.

It means that elements of the RN's Initial Officer Training and NCO management and leadership training will be linked to national standards which are met by the UK's civilian population.

Assessment will be through work-based assignments, and will span NVQs through to Diplomas in Strategic Management and Leadership, equivalent to post-graduate degrees.



● A detail of the watercolour of HMS Devonshire in 1929

### Scourge of the Atlantis

A WATERCOLOUR by Frank Wood of cruiser HMS Devonshire in 1929 is Trophy no 10773.

The painting was presented to the ship by Mrs Rawlings, the wife of the ship's first captain.

On November 22 1941 Devonshire sighted the German Kriegsmarine raider *Schiff 16* – better known as Atlantis – in the South Atlantic.

She was one of a flotilla of merchant ships equipped as auxiliary cruisers to prey on Allied vessels, using disguised superstructure to enhance the element of surprise.

By the time Atlantis encountered



● A videograb from the latest 2-6 DVD – a Special Families edition

# Latest DVD focuses on the families

THE latest 2-6 DVD – the annual Special Families Edition – will hit the streets shortly and will form part of your next Divisional Meeting.

The programme features an extended article on the Service Command and Staff Paper – effectively the Government's aspiration of how Service families should be looked after in the future.

Also in the DVD:

We catch up with Naval Families during HMS Gloucester's Families Day and see how the men and women of the Fighting G view what is important to them and their nearest and dearest;

We hear from a Naval wife who had to move her family from Derby to Portsmouth whilst her partner was deployed in Iraq;

The Naval Families Federation introduce themselves and tell how they can be of benefit to you;

Beijing gold medallist Lt Peter Reed reveals what it is like to be an Olympic champion;

CINCFLEET says what he

thinks about our families, current operations and the future.

In amongst all this, the regular *On Ops* feature and *Newsbelt* provide you with an update on what the Naval Service is doing globally – and includes information that could possibly save you some money.

Outside of Divisional Meetings, you can view this DVD and archived copies via the RN Community website ([www.rncom.mod.uk](http://www.rncom.mod.uk)) or [www.nff.org.uk](http://www.nff.org.uk), and also

via the RN Intranet at the Fleet Internal Communication Hub at <http://royalnavy.defence.mod.uk/fleetcc/IC%20hub.htm>

If you have a message that you would like to send to the RN or would like to feature in the 2-6 DVD *Your Shout* section, contact Lt Cdr Gregor Birse at [Gregor.birse922@mod.uk](mailto:Gregor.birse922@mod.uk), telephone 93832 8809 (023 9262 8809), or WO1(AWT) Baz Cooke at [barrie.cooke731@mod.uk](mailto:barrie.cooke731@mod.uk), telephone 93832 8821 (023 9262 8821).



## New 'Corps colonel' for Silent Service

A NEW post has been set up to address not only the recruiting issues that currently beset the Submarine Service but also the issues of retention and ethos.

Those in the Submarine Service will know their new 'Corps colonel' – Cdr Piers Barker. Those outside will see much of him as he visits the recruiting authorities who will aid his team in its quest.

The new role was mooted in 2007, when it was decided that a dedicated Submarine Service Commander was required to act as a focal point for the recruiting effort and to address critical shortfalls of submarine recruits.

Cdr Barker will also deliver fundamental 'seed corn' activity and set the conditions for recruiting the "follow-on SSBN manpower bulge".

This focal point and recruiting initiative has already been successful when adopted by the RM and FAA, who appointed officers at SO1 level to act as Corps colonels, and specifically, to turn around critical manpower shortages in their respective arms.

Cdr Barker said: "This is not something that can be turned around overnight but requires a campaign of co-ordinated activity to ensure the scarce resources at our disposal are used to maximum effect. There is much to do."

WO Colin Mould, the Warfare Ratings Branch Manager, and CPO (ET)(ME) Jonathon Swindells, Captain Naval Recruiting's specialist Submarine Recruiter (who will be relieved this month when he returns to sea in HMS Vengeance), are working with Cdr Barker to turn around a



● Cdr Barker presents a new RN/Submarine Service-sponsored strip to the Tulloch Tigers, a girls' team sponsored by CNR, who go into schools to coach and teach confidence, and also provide help and support at the Erskine Hospital

period of recruiting decline.

So far the effort has been split along the Humber-Mersey line, with WO Mould taking the south and Cdr Barker looking north as far as Shetland.

CPO Swindells has fulfilled the role of the submarine subject matter expert within CNR's HQ and has started a number of initiatives within the communities from which the Navy aims to recruit, enhancing the visibility of the RN and the Submarine Service.

Cdr Barker said: "I am very proud to have taken up the role of Corps colonel for the Submarine

Service and to be the first in post. "The Submarine Service faces a number of challenges both now and in the future, that by teamwork, application and action, can and will be overcome."

"The drumbeat of the Astute class, the requirement to recruit for the Trident successor as well as maintaining the manpower for our current submarine classes, is not to be underestimated."

"My remit of addressing the long-term recruiting, retention and ethos issues in order to man a sustainable and modern Submarine Service is a task that I relish."

## Donations will avoid festive parcel rush

MEMBERS of the public who send Christmas gifts to unnamed British Service personnel overseas are being urged by the MOD this year to donate money to military charities instead.

Every Christmas the public donate gifts for those serving overseas, but the large number of packages can cause problems for friends and families sending cards and gifts to loved ones, and even challenge operational effectiveness and safety.

The MOD has introduced new controls on post after last year's festive period when, in the two months before Christmas, more than 21,000 sacks of mail, weighing over 170 tonnes, were sent to Afghanistan alone.

The majority of the mail was parcels generously donated to unnamed British personnel.

Such an enormous surge in the volume of post puts a strain on the supply chain, diverting effort from making sure that essential combat supplies such as ammunition, medical supplies, food and equipment reach the front line.

As much of this post must reach its destination by helicopter, particularly in Afghanistan, extra flights mean extra danger for pilots and crews.

For these reasons, the MOD, in partnership with British Forces Post Office (BFPO), is limiting the free postal system only to friends and families, with mail only being accepted if addressed to a named person.

Vice Admiral Peter Wilkinson, Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Personnel), said: "The generosity and support of the British public has been outstanding and it means a huge amount to all those serving in our Armed Forces."

"We are hugely grateful for all the public support for our Servicemen and women, but because of the great response, we urge people to donate to alternative organisations to minimise the impact of Christmas mail surges."

"When on operations, the receipt of news from home, a letter from your wife or children, is a huge boost to morale, but unfortunately, this can be delayed by the large volume of mail generously donated."

New controls will continue to allow free post to the friends and family of those serving on operations overseas whilst maintaining operational effectiveness.

Members of the public who wish to show their support, but who do not have someone specific to whom they can send a parcel, are encouraged to donate to a range of charities including UK4U Thanks!, which provides a Christmas parcel for every Serviceman and woman serving overseas on Christmas Day, the RBL, PoppyScotland, SSAFA, Seafarers UK, RNBT and Help for Heroes.

Mail arrangements for families and friends are unaffected. Packages up to 2kg may be sent free of charge at any time through the Royal Mail and BFPO to named personnel in eligible ships and theatres.





# Farewell to men of Hood

THE DARK morning of May 24 1941 has been recalled in a moving memorial in the Denmark Strait and in a sad farewell at a funeral ceremony at HMS Collingwood in Fareham.

Ted Briggs, the last of only three survivors of the dreadful sinking of the battle-cruiser HMS Hood, died from pneumonia aged 85 on October 5.

Family, friends and members of the HMS Hood Association were joined by many serving sailors at the service at St George's Church in the Naval establishment, which was led by Chaplain of the Fleet The Ven John Green.

He said: "He was a living link with naval history in a way that mere words can't be, and he will continue to be part of that living history even though he may no longer be with us in the flesh."

Weeks earlier a cruise ship from Newcastle altered course to allow one of its guests to pay tribute to his father.

John Dowdell was only five years old when he lost his father, one of the 1,415 men who died when the ship sank after a fateful encounter with the German battle-ship Bismarck.

During a cruise to Iceland and Greenland on the Fred Olsen's cruise ship Boudicca, Mr Dowdell mentioned his interest to military historian Hugh Davies who was lecturing on the voyage.

Once the ship's master Capt Bjarne Bahne Larsen heard this information, he decided to divert his ship 60 nautical miles to the exact spot where HMS Hood went down.

Capt Larsen himself led a memorial ceremony on board his ship, with a period of two-minute silence observed by all passengers and ship's company on board the cruise ship.

Mr Dowdell said: "When we left on the cruise we intended to drop three flowers into the sea near the spot where my father died on behalf of my two sisters, Iris and Barbara, and myself."

"As it turned out, I was able to drop a wreath on the actual spot where the ship went down."

"This made it a truly memorable trip."

As a memento of the day, Mr Dowdell was given a nautical chart showing the ship's diversion from its scheduled route to the spot where HMS Hood was lost.

● (Right) The funeral of Ted Briggs at HMS Collingwood in Fareham



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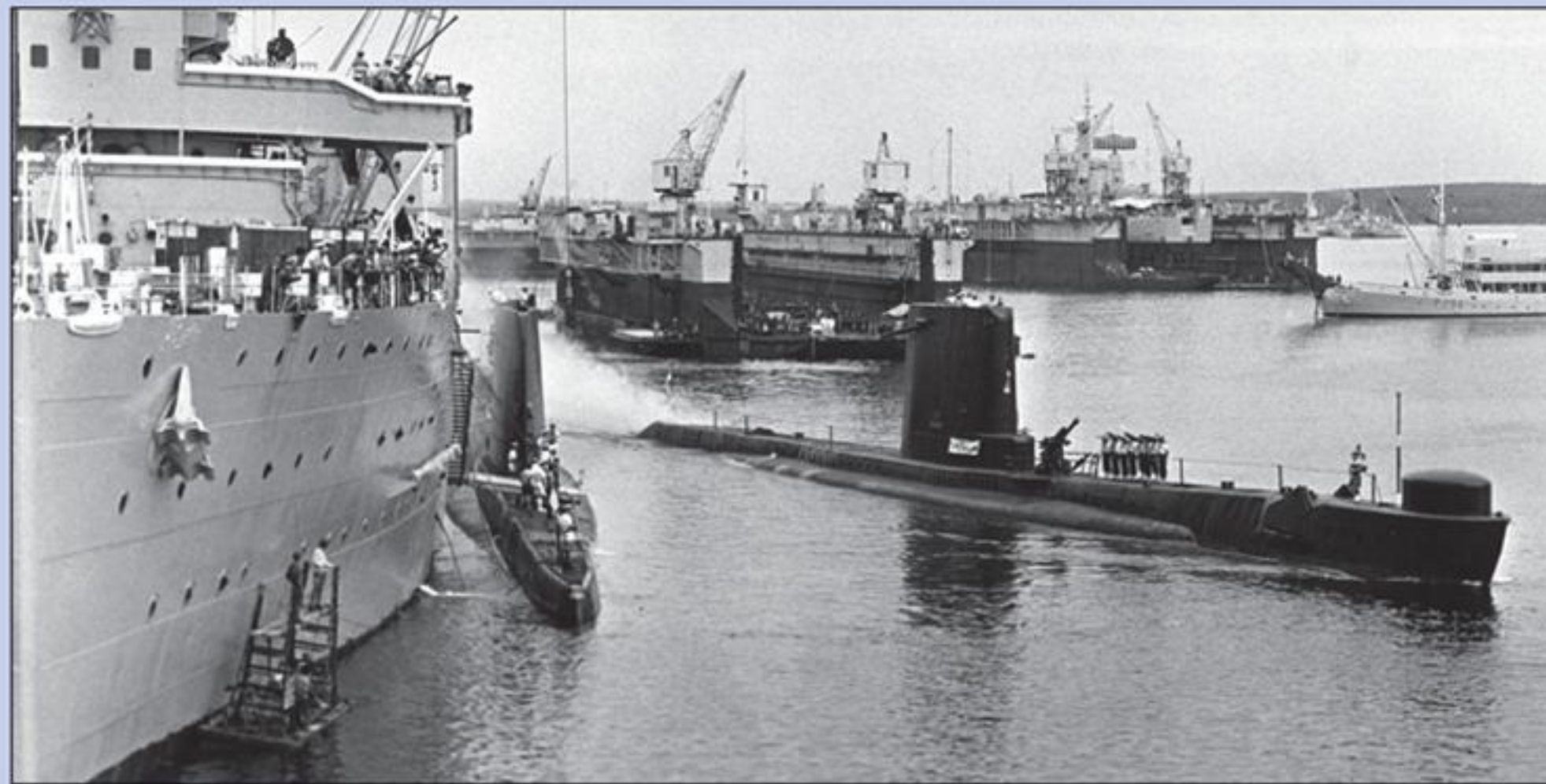
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## NOTICEBOARD

### 1968 1978 1988 THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES



● Submarine HMS Andrew leaves Singapore in 1968 in full oriental fashion, with fire-crackers bursting from the stern and her crew wearing coolie hats

#### November 1968

SUBMARINE HMS Andrew set out from Singapore on her long journey home to the UK when she came to the rescue of two Malaysian fishermen whose boat had sunk two days earlier. After a spot of submariner hospitality the two fishermen were handed over to the Singaporean authorities for return to the safety of dry land.

#### November 1978

THIRTY years ago proves that the notion of swapping entire crews on minehunters is nothing new. Some 90 per cent of the crews of HMS Lewiston and HMS Bronington swapped places, along with the funnel badges of the two ships – with Lewiston's Hampshire Rose on Bronington, and Bronington's Scottish Lion appearing on Lewiston's funnel.

#### November 1988

IT was announced that the time had finally come for junior rates to enjoy their dinners from china plates. Extensive trials were carried out throughout the fleet to ensure the smooth transition over several years from stainless steel platter to the china crockery already found in senior rates' messes and officers' wardrooms.

### Sports lottery

September 20: £5,000 – CSgt D J Lynn, 1AGRM; £1,500 – Lt S R Mettam, Northwood HQ; £500 – MEM1 A G Beresford, HMS Endurance.

### Swap drafts

LET(ME) Lee would like a swap draft from HMS Liverpool in December to MCM2 squadron. Anybody interested is to contact him by email asap at [stokermike30@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:stokermike30@yahoo.co.uk).

POMA D Alker. Contact: 93255 6813. Current position: First Aid Training Unit Faslane, First Aid Instructor qualification or DITT & FA level 2 required. Will consider anything south of the border, preferably near the Portsmouth area.

Logs(CS/D) Louise Hogan. Contact: 07530 764170 or HMS Exeter. Drafted to HMS York in November. Will swap for Type 22 or 23 frigate in Plymouth.

LET(ME) Parkes. Current draft: MCM1 Faslane. Will swap for any Portsmouth draft. Contact: [carlmichaelparkes@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:carlmichaelparkes@yahoo.co.uk).

LAET Walker. CoC LAET(M) currently employed on board HMS Illustrious as the GSE LH. Looking for any LAET(M) draft to Cottesmore or Wittering. Draft end date is currently January 2011 with the ship going into major refit at Rosyth in 2009. Contact: HMS Illustrious-AEDGELH.

September 27: £5,000 – AB L Marshall, HMS Collingwood; £1,500 – LH B R Carey, FOSNNI NRC; £500 – Lt S Yarker, RNAS Culdrose.

October 4: £5,000 – AB G Window, HMS Lancaster; £1,500 – MEM2 D James, HMS Cumberland; £500 – Mne N J Taylor, 45 Cdo RM.

October 11: £5,000 – OM(C)1 D S Martin, UKMCC Bahrain; £1,500 – Mne A L Robottom, CTCRM; £500 – LET G D L Dando, HMS Victorious (P).

September 27: £5,000 – AB L Marshall, HMS Collingwood; £1,500 – LH B R Carey, FOSNNI NRC; £500 – Lt S Yarker, RNAS Culdrose.

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### Assignments

Lt Cdr A Dunn to MASF (Fleet Forward Support (Air)) as CO on December 1.

Rear Adm A D H Mathews to be promoted to Vice Admiral and to be Chief of Materiel (Fleet), Chief of Fleet Support to the Navy on May 5 2009.

Capt G S Pritchard to HMS Endurance as CO on October 22.

Cdr A D Long to HMS Monmouth as CO on January 6 2009.

Lt Cdr R E J Dowdell to Lynx Operational Evaluation Unit as CO on November 18.

Lt C M Barrow to Cyprus Patrol Boat Squadron as CO(W) on November 1.

### Contact sheet

Ministry of Defence: 0870 607 4455, [www.mod.uk](http://www.mod.uk)

Royal Navy recruitment: 0845 607 5555, [www.royalnavy.mod.uk](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk)

Veterans Agency: 0800 169 2277, [www.veteransagency.mod.uk](http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk)

Medals enquiries: 0800 085 3600

RN and RM Service records: 023 9262 8779 or 023 9262 8667

Royal Naval Association: 020 7352 6764, [www.royal-naval-association.co.uk](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk)

RNBT: 023 9269 0112 (general), 023 9266 0296 (grants), [www.rnbt.org.uk](http://www.rnbt.org.uk)

British Legion: 08457 725725, [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)

RN Community: [www.rncom.mod.uk](http://www.rncom.mod.uk)

Naval Families Federation: 023 9265 4374, [www.nff.org.uk](http://www.nff.org.uk)

SSAFA Forces Help: 0845 1300 975, [www.ssafo.org.uk](http://www.ssafo.org.uk)

Royal Naval Museum: 023 9272 7562, [www.royalnavalmuseum.org](http://www.royalnavalmuseum.org)

Fleet Air Arm Museum: 01935 840565, [www.fleetairarm.com](http://www.fleetairarm.com)

Royal Marines Museum: 023 9281 9385, [www.royalmarinesmuseum.co.uk](http://www.royalmarinesmuseum.co.uk)

RN Submarine Museum: 023 9252 9217, [www.rnsubmus.co.uk](http://www.rnsubmus.co.uk)

National Maritime Museum: 020 8312 6565, [www.nmm.ac.uk](http://www.nmm.ac.uk)

Imperial War Museum: 020 7416 5320, [www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk)



## Deaths

Rear Admiral Kyrle-Pope. Joined the RN aged 13 in 1934 and the Submarine Service in 1938. At the outbreak of war he was serving as third hand in the submarine Oswald and while on the surface she was detected and rammed by an Italian destroyer; he was rescued and began four years as a POW, when he made at least five attempts to escape; he became an accomplished picker of locks, which enabled him to steal food, equipment and Italian uniforms for use in his escape attempts. After being released at the end of the war he was awarded an MBE for his leadership qualities whilst a prisoner. On return to the UK he was appointed first lieutenant of the newly-built battleship Vanguard; he served in Washington, with Naval Intelligence in Germany then moved to the Far East as Head of Naval Intelligence. 1958-60 he held the post of Senior Naval Officer, Persian Gulf and his final appointment was as Rear Admiral and Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief in the Far East before retiring in 1969. He served as County President of the Royal British Legion (Hertfordshire) and supported the RNA as an active President of two branches; and was also the longest serving of the 300 Younger Brethren of Trinity House. He was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant in 1983. September 14. Aged 91.

William Wallace 'Bill' Romeling. CPO MEA. Served 1951-78 in Fearless, Tiger, Bulwark, Rampura, Caledonia; at Kowloon, Hong Kong and also toured Aden, Malaya and Korea. Awarded MSM 1978. Civilian instructional officer at HMS Sultan 1978-1989. September 17. Aged 78.

Mike Pearson. Served in Ganges, Maidstone, Mull of Kintyre, Loch Fada, Vernon, Daedalus, Terror, Whitesand Bay, Newcastle, Tyne, Finisterre, Bellerophon and Comus; HMS Comus Association. September 7. Aged 75.

David Denton. L/Seaman. Served in Morecambe Bay 1951-54 (Far East Commission); member of the association.

William 'Bill' Smith. LME. Served in Bellerophon, Brocklesby, Centaur, Newfoundland, Osprey, Portland, Raleigh, Sheffield, Sultan and Victory. August 30 in Canada. Aged 76.

Alfred William James 'Bill' Allen. Seaman PO in Peacock 1947-49 and Bos'n's Mate in Loch Fada 1966-67; also served at Collingwood, Victory, Royal Arthur, Fowey, Vernon, LST 413, Vanguard, Myngs, Coquette, Undine and Duncan. Member of HMS Peacock and Loch Fada Associations. September 9. Aged 84.

Beryl Collier. Great supporter of HMS Peacock Association and wife of president. September 26.

Anthony Potter. Boy Seaman. Served in Ganges, Bruce, Vanguard and Norfolk. Was seriously wounded during the Yangtze Incident whilst serving in Black Swan 1949 and was invalided out of the service the same year. HMS Bruce Association since its inception. September 14. Aged 77.

David 'Bungy' Williams. PO Seaman. Served 1954-65 at Ganges and in Gambia, St Kitts, Camperdown, Dalrymple, Royal Arthur and Lion. September 10. Aged 69.

Jim 'Dusty' Rhodes. PO. Joined as a Boy 2nd Class before WW2 and served in Erebus, depot ship Resource; Cossack (L03) taking part in the Altmarr incident and the 2nd Battle of Narvik then light coastal forces. Qualified as a Seaman Torpedoman he joined MTB 218, Anthony (H40) to the Mediterranean for Italian campaign and Glenogle; then qualified as a Safety Equipment Technician with the FAA. Emigrated to Canada 1954 and joined the Canadian Armed Forces serving until 1965. HMS Cossack Association. August 20.

Lawrence 'Nuttie' Hazell. Served in Mohawk and Afridi. Associate member Cossack Association. July.

Martin 'Ned' Sparks. CPO Gunner Instructor. Served 1936-60 in Drake, Exeter (River Plate), Kenya, Badsworth, Woodcock, Adamant, Eagle and Britannia Royal Naval College. River Plate Veterans and Families Association. September 19. Aged 88.

Patricia Coates. WRNS. Served 1950s. Wife of Jim Coates, ex-Chief PTI (who played football for the RN and also played for England in the Olympics in Australia in the 1950s). HMS Morecambe Bay Association.

Donald McCafferty. AB. Served 1949-56 in Duke of York, Loch Veyatie and Daring. HMS Daring (1952-54) Association. September 13. Aged 77.

Dennis Chick. POMM. Served 1942-46 in various ships in the Mediterranean. September 27. Aged 83.

Lt Ted Briggs. Served 1938-73 joining HMS Ganges as a 15 year old and drafted to Hood 16 months later. He was an 18-year-old signalman when the fifth salvo from the German battleship Bismarck hit Hood's magazine and she was torn in half and sank in less than three minutes; he was one of only three members of the 1,418 crew to survive and was plucked from the sea by HMS Electra. After the war he was Officer in Charge of the Leading Rates Leadership School at Excellent, Whale Island and two years after leaving the navy he joined the newly formed HMS Hood Association as its first president. Over the years has taken part in television documentaries and radio programmes relating to the sinking of HMS Hood. October 4. Aged 85.

Ray Packer. PO. HMS Renown Association also TS Warspite, St Vincent, Iron Duke and LSTs. September 20. Aged 85.

Adrian 'Yorky' Town. CPO GI. Trained at Chatham Gunners School and served in Pembroke, Ganges and London division RNR. Took charge of the front gardens of Pembroke House, Chatham. Chatham RN Gunners Instructor's Association. October 4. Aged 90.

Neville Burgess. Fleet Chief MEA(P). Served 1956-80. Joined Figgard as Apprentice Jan 1956 (Series 26). Served in Yarmouth, Exmouth, Undaunted, Hecate, Tamar, Fawn and Raleigh. September 10.

Phil 'Danny' Kaye. PO Bosun, and CPO(SEA) RAN. Served in Arethusa, Danae, Hermione, Birmingham, Kent, Illustrous and Manchester. Joined the Royal Australian Navy December 2007 after completing 24 years service with the RN. August 26. Aged 43.

Ray Davey. Leading Seaman. Served 1951-63 in Arethusa, Cheviot, Scorpion, Bermuda and Belfast. Member of Royal British Legion, RNA, HMS Cheviot Association and 8th Destroyer Association. October 4. Aged 72.

Dennis Robert Williams. CPO Telegraphist. Served 1931-55 at St Vincent then served in Royal Sovereign, Effingham, Exmouth, Wild Swan, Windsor, Sardonyx, Arrow, Scorpion, Dainty, St Angelo, Atherstone (awarded the Croix de Guerre at St Nazaire Raid 1942), Mercury, Scotia,

Haitian, Braganza 3, Naval Party 2441, Duke of York and Glasgow. WW2 action in Home Waters, Atlantic, Norway, Mediterranean and Far East, October 7. Aged 93.

Cyril 'Roy' Maber. CPO FAA. Served 1939-58 in carriers, squadrons and air stations including Eagle, Argus, Triumph and Formidable; Korea, Africa, Malta and Atlantic Convoys. George Cross Island Association and PRO for West branch. October 8. Aged 86.

Donald Leslie Cattermole. CPOSA. Served 1956-80. Joined Ganges as a Boy and changed to Supply Branch 1962. Served in Forth, Seahawk, Dunkirk, Reclaim, Kent, Terror, Blake, Nelson, Devonshire and Bristol. April 7. Aged 67.

Alfred Epps. AA1(AE). Served 1947-84. Solent branch Fleet Air Arm Association. September 10.

Roy Iles. Served in Dampier and Shackleton. Survey Ships Association. October. Aged 69.

Ken Mallard. CPOWEA. Served 1962-90 in submarines Turpin, Alliance, Valiant, Sceptre, Spartan and Turbulent. October 9. Aged 65.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION  
Jim Reid. L/Sea. Served 1951-61. Joining as a boy he served in Cardigan Bay, Albion, Launceston Castle and Daring. Daring (1952-54) Association and Swindon RNA. September 4. Aged 72.

Margaret Coster. Wren Air Mechanic (E). Served 1951-53 at Burford, Yeovilton, Arbroath and Culdrose. Aquitaine RNA. September 11 at Sigoules, Dordogne.

John Mapletto. Radar Operator. Served RN 1943-51 joining Ganges as a Boy; Black Swan (Far East) and Thesus (Korea). Lieutenant Hinkley Sea Cadets for 30 years. Hinkley, Lincs. (Area 8) RNA. July 21. Aged 83.

Walter 'Wall' Davis. AB/Sig. Joined Royal Arthur 1942 AB/Sig. Served in Europa. Lowestoft on various minesweepers and destroyers which were given unofficial titles such as Harry Tate's Navy and Churchill's Pirates. Awarded unique Silver Badge for service on small ships. Transferred from RN to Bedford and Hertford Regiment Infantry HQ as a Bugler based at Kikee Barracks, Colchester May 1945. Canberra RNA. September 5. Aged 85.

Desmond Albert Priest. Served 1947-55 in Belfast, Birmingham and Victorious. Headquarters member. August 31.

John Walford. PO ASDIC. Served 1939-47 in Ganges, Kimberley, Colombo and Cadiz. Kendal branch. August.

Alan Timms. Kendal branch. September.

Anthony Buhagiar. Chief Steward. Served 1935-57 in Comet, Wishart and Bulldog, based at Iceland shepherding various convoys including Russia and probably the last survivor of the crew that captured the Enigma machine and secret German naval codes from U110 off Iceland May 10, 1941. Joined submarine Porpoise at Alexandria. A survivor of the submarine depot ship Medway when she was torpedoed and sunk in 1942. Later served in minesweepers in the Red Sea and in various destroyers. Committee member of the Malta branch and treasurer for over 20 years. September 16. Aged 93.

George Woodley. CPO. Joined St Vincent 1939 as a Boy then served in Revenge, Nelson, Belfast, Delight (survivor), Excellent, Q-ship Crispin (survivor), Nile, Griffin, Coventry (survivor), Canopus, Pool, Mayina, Caradoc, Gorleston, Boscowen, Illustrous and Peacock. Seconded to RAN 1948-51 and served in HMAS Penguin, Cerberus and Lonsdale; then Dryad, Hornet, Bulwark, Glasgow, Armada, Excellent (Horsea WT Station) and Dolphin. Pensioned 1961. Member of the Gunners branch throughout his service and Basingstoke RNA for many years before transferring to Isle of Wight branch in 2003. August 19. Aged 86.

Edwin 'Eddie' Charles Newsome. Joined Chatham 1938 as a Seaman Gunner and served in Woolwich, Stag, Tyne and Urchin. Released from RN 1946 and joined the Royal Fleet Reserve until discharged in 1955. Dartford RNA. September 13. Aged 88.

Fred Bratton. Chief ERA. Served 1936-62 in Sirius, Mermaid, Blenheim, Crispin and Birmingham. Survived sinking of Barham. Stourbridge branch. Aged 88.

Harry George Saunders. Beccles branch. September 28. Aged 84.

Joe Corbushley. Asdic operator in Flower-class corvettes and later a Leading Seaman Instructor at Osprey, Northwich branch RNA; also a member of the Flower-class Corvette Association and Captain Walker's Old Boys Association. September. Aged 89.

Frederick William 'Fred' White. Served RN prior to outbreak of WW2 and joined Hood 1938 (Spanish Civil War); left to train as a torpedo-man. Survived sinking of Dainty (Far East) then served in Penelope and Viceroy. Demobbed at end of war. Founded HMS Hood Association and a Founder member of Weymouth RNA. September 16. Aged 90.

Jim Pounder. CPO EM. Served 1953-75 at Collingwood and in Phoebe, Gambia, Llandaff and Berry Head. Past chairman and life member Dagenham branch RNA and Club. September 10. Aged 76.

## NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

■ Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to – The Editor, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth. PO1 3HH or email: [edit@navynews.co.uk](mailto:edit@navynews.co.uk). If you are sending your notice in via email, please include your full address and telephone number.

■ Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.

■ Please send in Reunions at least three months (preferably four) before the month of the event.

■ There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.

■ Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.

■ The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.

■ Space does not allow us to accept more than one free insert. Any subsequent notice will have to be paid for at advertising rates.

Entries for the Deaths' column and Swap Drafts in December's Noticeboard must be received by **November 13**

## Ask Jack

Arctic Convoys: Can anyone who served on the Arctic Convoys remember my late father, Surg Lt Ian G Wickes RNRV? He was on convoys from Liverpool to Murmansk between July 1944 and May 1945 in corvettes or HMS Exe (frigate) and HMS Bideford (sloop) but the MoD records are incomplete for that period. My mother is the only witness and I need corroboration to establish his entitlement to the Arctic Emblem. I would be most grateful for any leads. Please contact Dr Charles Goodson-Wickes at [cgw@medarc-limited.co.uk](mailto:cgw@medarc-limited.co.uk) or tel: 020 7629 0981.

Cdr A H Cherry RNRV: Mr Duke bought a first edition book in a charity shop in Cardiff some 30 years ago. The book was titled *Yankee RN* and was written by Cdr Cherry. He volunteered for duty before America came into the war. His first ship was HMS Winchester and is an interesting account of his time at war. Mr Duke would like to offer the book to a member of Cdr Cherry's family. Contact Mr B Duke, 47 Richmond Road, Whitstable, Kent, CT5 3PH or tel: 01227 277935.

HMS Cochrane: I had a good friend in the RN in the 1970s, Sean Leslie Stewart, who was an REM but became LWEM. I was looking at the internet the other day and decided to look him up. It seems he died at HMS Cochrane 9/5/1989. Can anyone give me any information of 'Stew' in the 1980s. Contact Wayne 'Tush' Tushingham at [tush134@hotmail.com](mailto:tush134@hotmail.com) or tel: 01454 415055

HMS Maggie: My dad, Cyril Arthur Buckley, passed away on the 17th 2001. He served on Maggie on the arctic convoys to Russia and I have his civilian blazer with Maggie crest sewn on the pocket, if anybody wants it. It is in good condition as he only wore it to Maggie reunions. Contact Des Buckley at [desbuckley@yandex.ru](mailto:desbuckley@yandex.ru) or tel: 07795 508138.

Strait Street, Valletta, Malta: What memories do you have of 'the Gut' or Strait Street in Malta? John Schofield is looking for tales and anecdotes of servicemen who have served in Malta. Experiences and photographs would be appreciated. He would also like to hear from you if you ever obtained a tattoo in Strait Street, however long ago. He is in contact with the tattoo artist in Strait Street, who is sometimes asked to freshen up tattoos done by his father or grandfather. Stories and photographs, including pictures of tattoos would be appreciated. Contact John Schofield at [John.Schofield@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:John.Schofield@english-heritage.org.uk) or 5 Silver Street, Wivellcombe, Somerset, TA4 2PA.

Tracing a Motor Launch: I'm trying to find out some of the history of my ex Navy motor launch, and possibly photographs of my vessel or similar. She was a 45ft wooden motor launch powered by twin Gardner diesel engines. Being built in 1942 by Thornycroft of London with Yard No.2690. She was apparently the QHM harbour launch at Devonport for part of her navy life. At present I am unsure of what happened with her for the rest of her life, but she eventually ended up on the broads, with her current name 'White Lady' before finally I came to be her present owner in Oulton Broad, Lowestoft. Any information or pictures would be gladly appreciated. Contact Scott Snowling at [s.snowling@gmail.com](mailto:s.snowling@gmail.com) or write to 16 Lawson Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR33 0ES.

HMS Ocean: William would like to contact anyone who served with his late father, Norman Jackson. A native of Northern Ireland, Leading Stoker Mechanic, who served on board HMS Ocean. Believe he was a Devonport based rating and was demobbed around 1952. Hoping to hear from some old shipmates. Contact William Jackson at [w.jackson3@ntlworld.com](mailto:w.jackson3@ntlworld.com) or tel: 028 9258 7329 or write to: William Jackson, 16 Clontara Park, Lisburn, County Antrim, Northern Ireland, BT27 4LB.

George Thomson: Looking for George Thomson, born in 1914 in Scotland but lived in Newcastle upon Tyne. Was a Royal Naval Chief during WW2, but not sure what ship he was on. After the war he went back to live in Newcastle upon Tyne. Anyone who knows him or his relatives please contact me. Any photos of him would be fantastic. Contact Amanda Perrin at [alperrin@westnet.com.au](mailto:alperrin@westnet.com.au) or write to 5 McGill Avenue, Glengowrie, South Australia, 5044.

Alexander Thornton: Looking for relatives of Alexander who moved to Australia. His granddaughter is researching her family and would like to contact any living relatives. Contact Estelle Granger at [berg977@bigpond.com](mailto:berg977@bigpond.com) or write to PO Box 623, Karatha, 6714, Western Australia.

HMS Hecla: My uncle Ronnie Williams, a Welshman, died a while back and was torpedoed whilst serving on this ship on November 12 1942. His daughter asked me if I could pick up any information for her. The story is that Ronnie, along with other comrades, was picked up by another vessel which in turn was also hit. Ronnie wasn't a very talkative man, but we're told he was reported missing in action. Some time later, around six weeks, he was reported to be alive and well somewhere in Africa, where a local farmer used them to help harvest his fields. The latrine was outside the compound and they were solemnly warned not to venture to it at night as gorillas stalked around it. I'd dearly love to know exactly what happened to Ronnie and his shipmates all those years ago, as would his daughter Alma who was born a few weeks before he was reported missing. Sadly she is the last of Ronnie's family. I do hope you can help us. Contact John Campbell, 19 Seabank Parade, Belfast BT15 3NW, Northern Ireland.

## Reunions

OCTOBER 2008  
Devonport Command Field Gunners: Command 100 Golf Classic at the China Fleet Club, Saltash, near Plymouth. For more information contact Fred Pearce at [FREDIEPEARCE@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:FREDIEPEARCE@blueyonder.co.uk) or tel: 01752 202860.

NOVEMBER 2008  
HMS Ambuscade Association & ex '21 Club' members: The Ambuscade Association welcomes all old shipmates and 21 club members to their annual pilgrimage to Devonport this November. We have a number of events planned starting with an informal gathering on 14th November @ 2000 at The St Levan Inn, Devonport. Most of our association members served on more than one Twenty One so we are hoping to reunite as many club members as possible. For more details please contact Mark Brocklehurst at [mark@sharplesgroup.com](mailto:mark@sharplesgroup.com) or tel: 01925 839592 (working hours) or visit the website at <http://www.ambuscade.org>

FEBRUARY 2009  
HMS Penelope: Reunion & AGM 2009. To be held in Blackpool. For details of reunion February 20-22 and membership, contact the secretary Mike Bee at [mike.bee@ntlworld.com](mailto:mike.bee@ntlworld.com) or write to 1 Oddfellows Street, Mirfield, WF14 9AB.

HMS Glory 1943-1956: Reunion and AGM at the Sand Bay Holiday Village, Keystone, Weston Super Mare from February 27 to March 2. More details from Tom Stallard at [margaretstallard@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:margaretstallard@yahoo.co.uk) or tel: 01303 256457 or write to 18 Sandwich Close, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 3QG.

MARCH 2009  
RN & RM Ex-Boxers Association: The next reunion will take place on March 27 at South Parade Pier, Portsmouth, and takes the form of a Boxing dinner. The association is currently 120 strong and comprises former boxers from RN, RM and even some who are still serving. For more information contact Tony Bevel at [tkbevel@btinternet.com](mailto:tkbevel@btinternet.com) or tel: 01489 880472 or Mob: 07500 058801.

APRIL 2009  
HMS Ceylon (all commissions): Reunion to be held at Kistor Hotel in Torquay from April 24 to 27. For further details contact Tony Mendoza at [tonymarinem@netscape.net](mailto:tonymarinem@netscape.net) or tel: 023 9283 7003 or write to 5 Heidelberg Road, Southsea, PO4 0AS.

## Where are you now?

HMS Glasgow (C21/D88): Where have you been since drafted from the ship? Both crews are welcome to the mess decks and also to join in with our annual reunions. The 2009 reunion is being held in Blackpool, so come on and help me fill the hotel with ex-crew and your partners. Details from Gary Eaton on 07864 712776 or Allan Mercer on 0151 422 8026.

HMS Helicon-Aultbea 1947: Seeking information or contact with 'Taff' Bradley. We served together as supply assistants, de-storing the Loch Ewe bases with the help of about a dozen local drivers. Contact Robert Harding, Oakenholt Hall, Oakenholt, Flintshire, CH6 5SU or tel: 01352 761466.

Michael Johnson: I am urgently trying to trace a cousin of mine called Michael Johnston. I believe that he joined the Navy in 1973-74. He was born March 1956 and lived at 22 Wilton Street, Manchester. His mother was Margaret Johnston, née Flynn, originally from Armagh, Northern Ireland. If anybody served with him or knows of his whereabouts please contact Mark Flynn at [mflynn2@btinternet.com](mailto:mflynn2@btinternet.com) or tel: 07824 317589.

HMS Loch Fyne 1962-63: Trying to make contact with RO1 Thompson, part of the 'G' Branch during this commission. Mike Sleight, Dave Skinner and Reg Ball are communicating. Please contact Mike Sleight at [mikesleight@sky.com](mailto:mikesleight@sky.com) or tel: 0165 877425.

HMS Raleigh: Trying to find Sian Blundell. The last we heard she had got married, but didn't know her new name. She started basic training at Raleigh with Louise Baines in October 2001. I was in Cornwall 40 entry and Sian was in Cunningham 40 entry. Sian was a MEM at the time and is probably now an MA or LMA. Contact Louise Baines at

MAY 2009  
HMS Ganges Association: Annual reunion from May 8 to 11 at the Sinah Warren Hotel, Hayling Island. An excellent venue to which we have exclusivity for the weekend. A bumper turnout is expected and early booking is advised. Full details on the website: [www.hmsgangesassoc.org](http://www.hmsgangesassoc.org) or contact Tony Thipthorpe at [thipthorpe@btconnect.com](mailto:thipthorpe@btconnect.com) or tel: 01702 341968.

HMS Widemouth Bay 1944-57: 13th reunion and AGM at the Angel Hotel, Leamington Spa, May 15-16. All former shipmates welcome. Contact: Reg Moss at [reg.moss@o2.co.uk](mailto:reg.moss@o2.co.uk) or tel: 01784 440047 or write to 38 Lansdowne Road, Staines, Middlesex, TW18 1HQ.

JUNE 2009  
USS Hermitage LSD 34 (Navy): is having a reunion from June 4 to 7, 2009 in Norfolk, Virginia, USA. Anyone interested should contact C J DeHart at [dehartcj@iowatelecom.net](mailto:dehartcj@iowatelecom.net) or write to 213 Benton St W, Hazelton, Iowa, 50641, USA.

HMS Glorious, Ardent and Acasta (Glarac): A memorial service to commemorate the 69th anniversary of the sinking of the ships will take place on June 7 at St Nicholas Church, HMS Drake, Devonport. All former crew, aircrew, survivors, relatives and friends are warmly invited to attend. Details from Vincent Marcroft at [vinny847022@hotmail.com](mailto:vinny847022@hotmail.com) or tel: 0161 654 7638 or write to 15 Hillside Drive, Middleton, Manchester, M24 2LS.

AUGUST 2009  
HMS Ceres (Wetherby 1946-58): The seventh reunion of HMS Ceres will be held from August 14 to 16 at the Crown Hotel, Harrogate, North Yorks. All shipmates who served at Ceres or Moorlands are welcome along with partners to attend. Contact Richard Knight at [knight.ceres53@ntlworld.com](mailto:knight.ceres53@ntlworld.com) or tel: 01937 561404 or write to 41 Glenfield Avenue, Wetherby, West Yorkshire, LS22 6RN.

SEPTEMBER 2009  
Friends of HMS Vidal: 2009 reunion September 18 at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, Kent. Contact David Parker on 020 8648 0160 or [david@parker1938.freemove.co.uk](mailto:david@parker1938.freemove.co.uk) or see the website <http://www.123freehost.co.uk/sites/friendsfhmsvidal/> for more details. All commissions, and all ranks, welcome.

[louisebaines@btinternet.com](mailto:louisebaines@btinternet.com) or tel: 01484 418646.

HMS Warspite: It's 40 years ago on October 9 that Warspite whilst shadowing a Russian Echo 2 class sub collided with it in the Barents Sea. All the newspapers at the time printed the MOD line that Warspite had hit an iceberg but this has subsequently been rubbished on the internet and by various newspapers. I keep in touch with a couple of ex shipmates and would like to know if there are enough living to make some sort of reunion. Please contact Mr Ian Wragg at [i.wragg2@ntlworld.com](mailto:i.wragg2@ntlworld.com) or tel: 07712 050655.

HMS Whirlwind 'Caribbean Journey' 1962-63: Would like to hear from Titch Thornely, Birdy Swallow, Dave Warman, Nobby Clarke, Brian Crawford, Ron Eldin, J Fodin, Gilly Glesby, Connie Francis, Ivor Iveson, Tony Cardy, Tex Meekings, Peter Mayes to name but a few. A few of us got together this year it was great to see each other after all the years. Contact L Sherwood at [oldnavy1@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:oldnavy1@tiscali.co.uk) or tel: 01303 242456 or write to 93 Lynwood, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 5DD.

Wrens: Seeking any ex-wrens in the Basingstoke area. We have started a get-together and currently have enough for a coven (makes us sound like witches, which some matelot might say is right). We meet at Janet Cleave's house every third Tuesday for an hour or so. We range from war-time to present day Wrens. To get more information contact Mrs K Killey on 01256 328287.

## Navy News on tape

Navy News is available free of charge on tape from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact number. No special equipment is needed to play the standard 90-minute cassettes.

## Competition

Congratulations to the winners of our Battle at Sea competition, who each received a copy of the Dorling Kindersley book:

Mr J Jarvie, Dunfirmline; I E Rothwell, Burnside, Cumbria; Mr A Hoare, Horsham; Mr K Lemar, Witney; Pat Jennings, BFPO 52; Mr H Baker, Leicester.

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## Frank Sutton Taylor



We seek contact with former shipmates or comrades who knew my Father in HM Royal Navy WW II

Name: Frank Sutton Taylor  
Rank: Able Seaman  
Service No: JX 324358  
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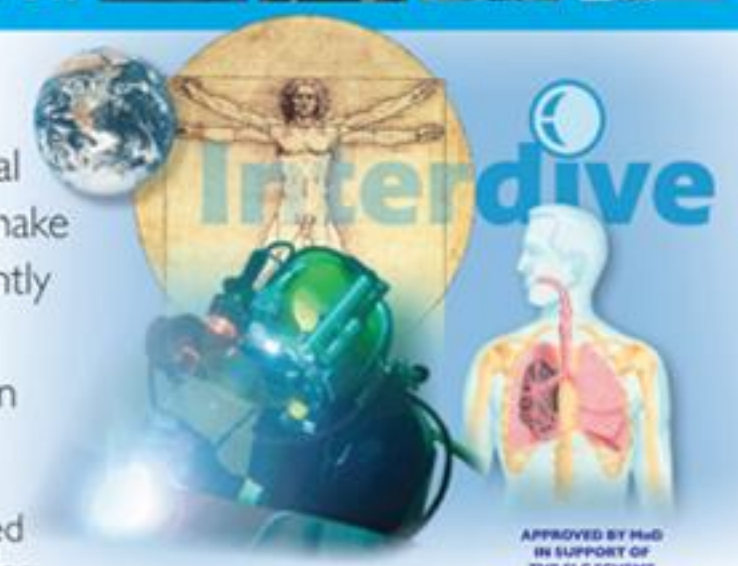
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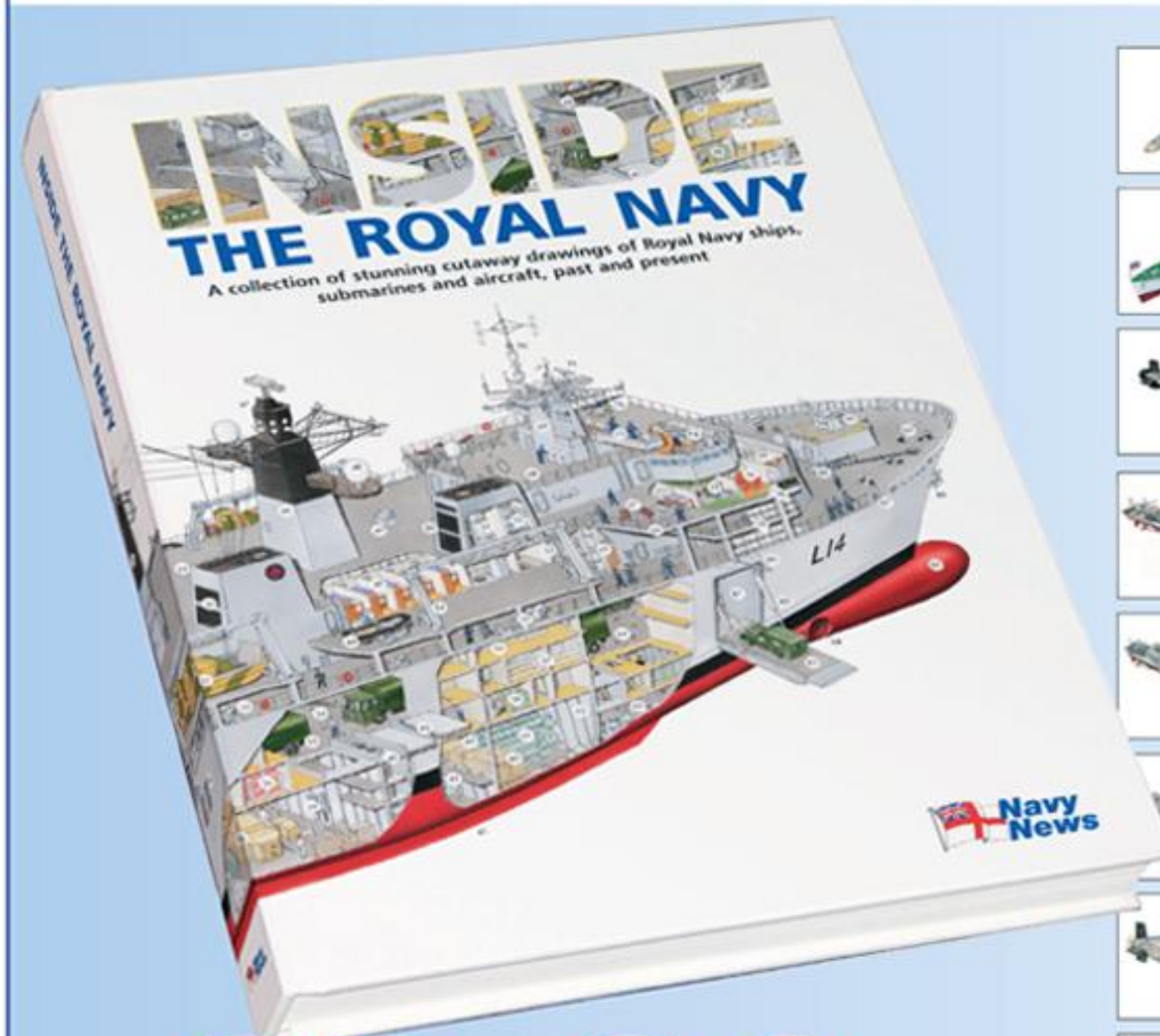
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# Photographic memories

Continued from page 27

probably because the original printing process went wrong.

Since 2004, all official images from the military's photographic branches have been supplied digitally – but this presents the museum with fresh challenges about access and long-term preservation.

"CDs are thought to have a lifespan of just five or ten years and JPEGs – the standard format for digital images – lose a little of their definition every time you open them," Mr Proctor pointed out.

"In ten or 20 years, technology will have moved on again, but prints are still popular."

And it is prints, held in cherished personal albums, which could help the museum in its next major project.

It is currently researching, documenting and digitising Cold War material to mark the 60th anniversary of the formation of NATO and the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall.

It hopes to gather 250 images of the Senior Service's vital role during the four-decade stand-off

between East and West.

"Most of our donations are of World War 1 and 2 images – and we welcome them. But people think we're only interested in the world wars. We're not. Our remit is all the 20th and 21st Century," said Mr Proctor.

"To me the Cold War is fascinating. There's the emphasis on technology, on missiles, anti-submarine warfare, intelligence and surveillance."

"You have thousands of sailors doing their National Service. And you'll also find the unusual sight of Russian sailors enjoying liberty in Portsmouth."

Today the collection stands some ten million images strong (the Great War accounts for 250,000 photographs, although the figure is constantly rising thanks to donations) with two out of every five pictures in colour.

And what each one of those ten million images crucially possesses is historical value.

"We do not do valuations – we are not an auction house. We're historians and archivists. We tell people if their pictures have historical value," Mr Proctor explained.

"People are overwhelmingly benevolent – they don't want to throw their pictures out, they want them to go to a good home."

■ You can view – and buy – some of the museum's ten million images (around 40,000 pictures have been digitised so far) online at [www.iwmcollections.org.uk/qryPhotolmg.asp](http://www.iwmcollections.org.uk/qryPhotolmg.asp). (The reference numbers for the photographs which appear in this feature appear at the end of each caption.)

There's also a selection of the best naval images uploaded at [www.iwmcollections.org.uk/atsea/](http://www.iwmcollections.org.uk/atsea/)

If you wish to inquire about the collections, arrange an appointment to view images, or donate naval imagery – especially Cold War material – call 020 7416 5333 or email [Photos@IWM.ORG.UK](mailto:Photos@IWM.ORG.UK)

● (Above left) Sailors load Mk VII depth charges into a long-range depth charge thrower – better known as the Fairlie Mortar or Five Wide Virgins – aboard HMS Whitehall in July 1941 (A4667). The destroyer trialled the weapon, which was not a great success.

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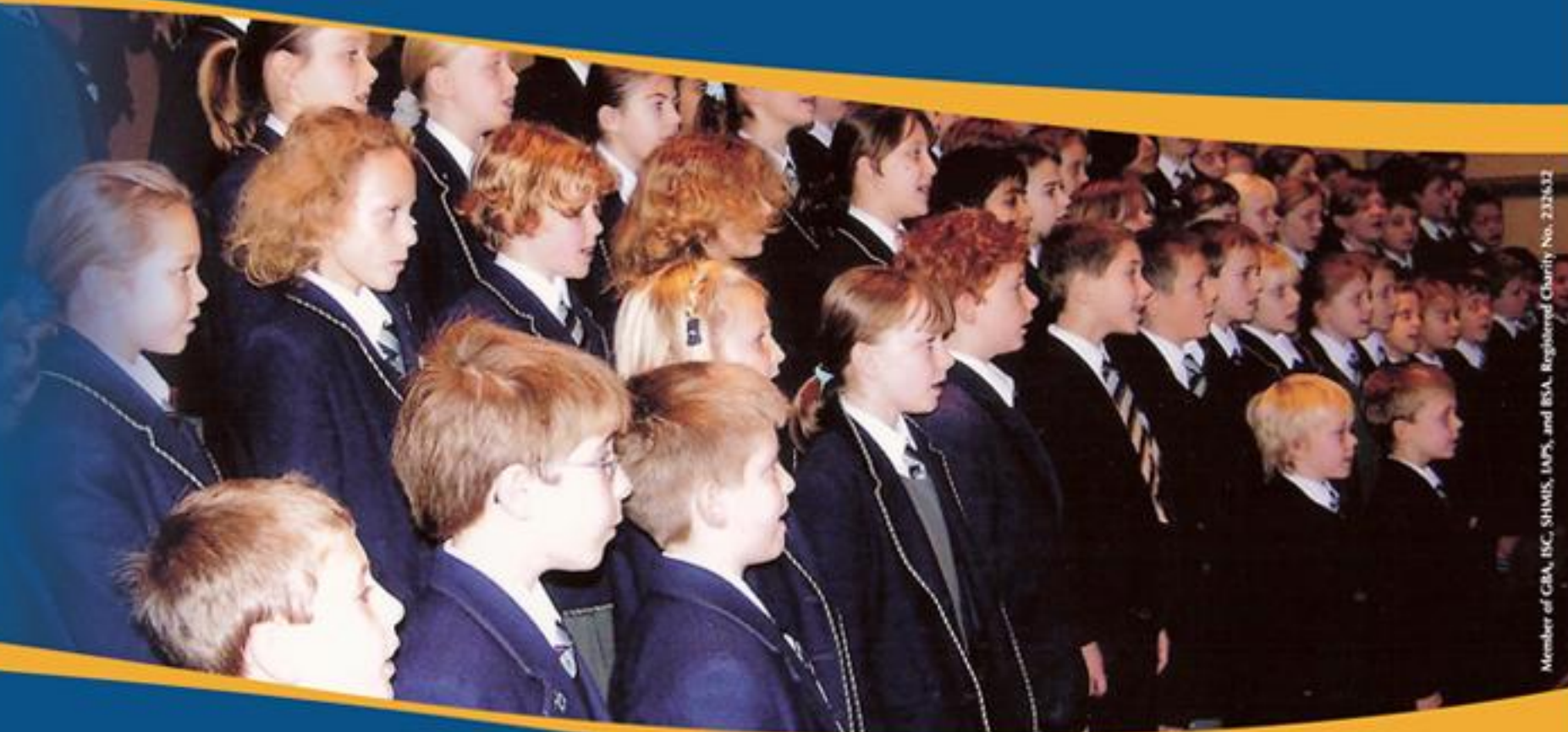
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## St John's marks birthday with hospice appeal

ST JOHN'S College is celebrating its centenary this academic year and has pledged to support children's hospice Naomi House as its charity of choice.

St John's official birthday is just days away, with a huge celebratory dinner planned for November 4.

The fundraising has already begun, however, with a recent sponsored walk at Queen Elizabeth Country Park organised by upper school pupils.

Sponsorship money is still to be calculated but all money raised will be donated to the Hampshire children's hospice and its most-recently-launched appeal 'jacksplace@naomihouse'.

Lower school pupils have also been involved with the fundraising events, staging an activities challenge event last Friday, where over £1,000 was raised in just one morning. (Pupil Tianey Pearce raised a massive £430 alone.)

Headmaster Nigel Thorne said: "We are delighted to be supporting such a worthwhile cause during

our 100th year.

"We have always been very supportive of a host of charities and local events but we wanted to focus our efforts during this important year, and everyone at the school is committed to raising as much money as possible."

"To be able to support a local children's charity is rewarding, particularly for our pupils who can perhaps identify with the fantastic work going on at the hospice."

"We're proud to be able to contribute towards some great fundraising efforts, which will make all the difference to some very poorly children and their families."

St John's is organising a whole host of special centenary events over the entire year including a charity concert, firework display and a fancy-dress party for some of the youngest members of the school.



## Buxton make mark at Nationals

BUXTON cadets comprised almost half of the North West Area team which competed in the Corps national sailing championships in Northern Ireland.

The 15-strong team won the Open Bosun trophy, the Topper crew came second, they were joint second in the Open Windsurfing contest and overall the team came fourth.

Not a bad show by the seven Buxton cadets, who were competing against the best of more than 400 units around the country, many of whom have the benefit of actually living quite close to the sea.

A group of 14 cadets from the unit attended a ceremony at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas to rededicate a tree planted in memory of the crew of a previous HMS Bulwark, which blew up at Sheerness in November 1914.

The cadets were inspected by Vice Admiral Sir Patrick Symons, president of the Bulwark, Albion and Centaur Association, and took part in a march-past.

A letter of congratulation has been received from the Vice Admiral complimenting the Buxton contingent on their drill and appearance, which were impeccable.

Strong winds failed to ruin the weekend for another party from Buxton, this time at Hollingworth Lake, where they picked up some useful sailing experience.

The unit is always keen to hear from potential cadets, and from adult volunteers who would be willing to help as instructors in a variety of skills. Contact Lt (SCC) Bruce Luckman on 01298 78092.

## By land, by water

CADETS from St Albans unit showed they are just as good on dry land as they are on the water by winning an expedition competition.

The four-strong team, led by LC Alse Sharp, demonstrated their skills in a variety of exercises including map-reading and orienteering, river-crossing, mountaineering, speed-marching and first aid.

LC Sharp, along with LCs Threadgold and Hughes and Marine Cadet Buck, now go on to the area competition.

Meanwhile, two St Albans cadets were praised by their CO for their efforts in the national canoe competition in London.

Lt Cdr Graham Waylett was pleased at the form shown by OC Samantha Smart, who battled through atrocious conditions to take silver, and Marine Cadet Ben Landsown, who came fourth despite a bad lane draw.



● Calm before the storm – offshore training ship TS John Jerwood

# Tykes take a trip to Northern Ireland

ELEVEN Sea Cadets from Huddersfield and the surrounding district made a return trip to Ireland in Corps offshore vessel TS John Jerwood.

The cadets, accompanied by CPOs (SCC) Bernadette Jones and Michael Watson of Huddersfield unit and AC Rayner of Huntingdon unit, joined the 25m offshore motor vessel and her four permanent crew at Preston Marina.

After an overnight rest the new ship's crew were ready to set sail.

The cadets were detailed into three watches, with each watch lasting two hours; the duty watch was responsible for keeping lookout, navigating and helming.

On entering a port all the cadets worked together on harbour routine, throwing out fenders and standing by with mooring lines.

After visits to Douglas and Port Erin the cadets sailed for Bangor in Ireland, at which point the trip became a little less enjoyable for the land-locked unit.

During the crossing several cadets suffered from sea-sickness, which resulted in the whole crew mucking in to cover watches and look after their stricken comrades.

An overnight stay in Bangor was followed by a further sea passage, this time to Campbeltown.

After another predictably wobbly day there was some relief at the opportunity of shore leave.

This provided cadets with the chance to see some sights and buy



● Huddersfield cadets make the most of a fine spell of weather on board TS John Jerwood

souvenirs of their journey.

After calling at Lamlash and Troon the voyage concluded in Largs, where the cadets were rewarded for their efforts with Offshore Power Hand certificates at grades one and two.

During the week the cadets were trained in the exacting skills

of navigation and seamanship.

As a crew they learned about teamwork and, probably most memorably, they learned about weather – bad weather, force six winds and high seas, to be specific.

On the cadets' return S/Lt (SCC) Craig Dawson RNR, the unit's Officer in Charge, congratulated

the cadets on their efforts and awarded them the badges and certificates that they had earned during the week.

S/Lt Dawson added that the opportunity to undertake a voyage on an offshore vessel such as TS John Jerwood was a really positive experience for young people.

## Pair are saved after boat race incident

TWO staff members of the Great Yarmouth unit rushed to the rescue of a mother and son when their dinghy got into trouble on the Norfolk Broads.

On a particularly rough day at Oulton Broad Yacht Club, PO (SCC) Graeme Richardson and CPO (SCC) Phil Corbyn, of TS Norfolk, were on duty providing rescue cover for the Norfolk Dinghy Championships.

The day was almost over, and events starting to wind down, when one of the competing boats caught its main sheet round a turning mark and tipped over sharply, taking in lots of water.

The pair on board were able to stabilise the dinghy, but by that stage it was totally swamped.

CPO Corbyn, who with another club member had seen events unfold, sped over in a boat while PO Richardson launched a second rescue RIB.

Within minutes the boy had been taken aboard the first boat and the dinghy had been secured and supported.

On arrival the second boat was able to free the dinghy, and both rescue craft towed the stricken boat back to shore.

PO Richardson said: "The weather had been bad all day, with strong winds and heavy rain throughout, but we were able to arrive very quickly, and between the two boats safely return them to shore."

## Unit is dealt a winning hand

WOOTTON Bassett unit has been able to buy new expedition kit thanks to a generous donation by a London guild.

The money provided by the Worshipful Company of the Makers of Playing Cards allowed the unit to buy tents, rucksacks and associated equipment.

The new kit will be used for expedition training and as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme.

## Medal winners

CADETS from Northampton and Wellingborough made a big impression at national regattas.

Among the top performers were brothers Matt and Luke Rixon, who won all their races and took home four gold medals in windsurfing, while Harry Boyde took third in one of his Topper races.

Six Northampton rowers took the Hornblower Trophy for senior boys – the first win by the Eastern Region in 45 years.

The junior boys and girls both won bronzes, while Cds Vine and Barley were third in Yole rowing.

The power boaters took fourth place in their competition.

## Victory at long last

A COMBINED team from Southwark and the City of London broke a long-standing run of defeats to take the coveted Chosin Cup at the London Area expedition training competition.

Teams of sea and marine cadets from Finchley, Brentwood, Croydon, Haringey and Waltham Forest, as well as the eventual winners, met at the Mereworth Woods training area in Kent.

And while the weather might have been fine, the name of the cup gave a hint of the hardships ahead, named as it is after the ferocious battle in freezing conditions during the Korean War in late 1950 – a battle in which

Royal Marines distinguished themselves.

The Sea Cadet version involves campcraft, map and compass work, a route march, obstacle course and a range of initiative tests.

Although neither Southwark or City of London have featured amongst the winners for many years, the six-strong combined team, under LCs Nathaniel Davenport and Eli Mowbray proved more than a match for the other units.

Maj Dave Poke, HQ Staff Officer ET, presented medals and trophies to the teams, and recalled how he had undertaken the challenge himself years before – and he was on the winning team.

## All ship-shape, Bristol (Knowle) fashion

MEMBERS of Bristol Knowle unit were surprised when they arrived at the 'office' to find things looking spick and span.

Lloyds TSB, with which the unit banks, was holding an 'Activity in the Community Day' and offered to lend a helping hand to deserving causes – such as the Sea Cadets.

Lt (SCC) Wendy Houlden, the unit CO, made contact with the bank, which resulted in 20 staff members, two of the unit committee and the CO putting in a day of hard physical graft.

More than two tons of unwanted items were taken to be recycled, including dismantling an old condemned caravan, which had been used as a galley.

The outside of the buildings were painted and brambles around the car park cleared.

As a thank you, a Certificate of Appreciation signed by Capt Jonathan Fry RN, Captain of the Sea Cadets, was presented to the group during the day.

● Lloyds TSB workers pictured in the Bristol Knowle unit car park







## Nelson – the man behind the legend

BARELY had the dust settled from the extensive Trafalgar 200 celebrations in north Norfolk before it was time for a quiet village to step back into the spotlight.

Burnham Thorpe found itself at the centre of celebrations marking the 250th anniversary of the birth of Admiral Lord Nelson, with descendants and dignitaries attending a weekend of events.

And among those in the village were Sea Cadets, who helped the weekend run smoothly and smartly.

Horatio Nelson was born in the

● **Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope** inspects the Sea Cadet Guard of Honour outside All Saints Church in Burnham Thorpe

village on September 29 1758 and grew up there before going to sea at the age of 12. His father was rector of All Saints' Church, where Nelson was christened.

One of the highlights of the Nelson 250 celebrations was a service of thanksgiving for Nelson's life, at which cadets provided the Guard of Honour and were inspected by the Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope.

Also attending was Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk Richard Jewson.

The weekend, initiated by the 1805 Club, included a formal dinner in Kings Lynn, a Nelson birthday concert at All Saints' Church and an exhibition of Nelson paintings, rare books and

manuscripts.

Club chairman Peter Warwick said Trafalgar 200 was a celebration of Nelson's military prowess, but the current initiative had a different focus.

"Nelson 250 allows us to celebrate his extraordinary life rather than commemorate his battles," said Mr Warwick. "We can highlight the importance of his childhood and formative years."

"These national celebrations also bring spirit of place since it is here in Norfolk that the remarkable story of Britain's greatest naval hero begins."

The 1805 Club is a charity dedicated to conserving the monuments of the Georgian navy and its heroes.

www.1805club.org

## Ship line donates row boats to MSSC

THE MARINE Society and Sea Cadets (MSSC) is celebrating the donation of 12 specialist rowing boats from the NYK Shipping Line.

The introduction of the Yole, a modern two-man rowing boat for beginners, will provide a fast, safe, low-maintenance craft specifically designed to develop advanced boating skills and enhance teamwork.

The boat will only be used by cadets once they have mastered the basic skills under the supervision of fully-qualified adults.

Capt Jonathan Fry, Captain of Sea Cadets, was delighted to receive the boats on behalf of the MSSC from Ian Aitcheson, Group Communications Officer for NYK, at the national Combined Regatta held in the Royal Victoria Docks, London.

Mr Aitcheson said he was "deeply impressed by the behaviour and enthusiasm of the cadets" and hoped the new Yoles would "encourage the cadets to continue to develop their impressive waterborne skills."

This is not the first sizeable contribution from NYK, who donated £30,000 in 2007 towards the 24m powered offshore vessel TS Jack Petchey, which is being built for the MSSC.

NYK (Nippon Yusen Kaisha) is one of the ten largest container and freight shipping companies in the world.

# Filey Award cadets show their mettle

FILEY unit has for some years enjoyed a fair proportion of cadets taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme – but 2008 must surely be the best year so far in terms of both terms of numbers and results.

To date in 2008 seven cadets have completed their Bronze award, two Silver, and there are seven doing Bronze, eight at Silver level and five doing Gold – with three staff joining them.

This means the unit has 100 per cent participation in the 14 to 17 age range – a statistic of which the unit is very proud.

The majority of the cadets use their service in the Corps for the 'Service' section.

This includes local fund-raising events, assistance to other organisations in Filey such as providing a guard of honour for many of the local civic functions, helping with Lifeboat Day and taking part in the annual Filey Festival.

All these events serve to raise the local profile of the Sea Cadets, who have developed a formidable reputation in Filey over the years.

In addition to the usual Trafalgar Day and Remembrance Day parades, the unit also provides a unique guard on the Saturday before Remembrance Day when a squad of cadets form a Silent Vigil outside the Memorial Gardens in the centre of Filey.

The Skill and Physical sections



● POC Stephen Merian in the power boating class of Summer 2008

of the Award are also normally completed with activities that are done within the Corps, such as sailing, kayaking, football, power boating, seamanship and other specialisations on offer.

The Expedition section is probably the hardest part of the

award comprising both a practice and qualifying section as well as a great deal of preparation in map reading, route planning, menu planning and kit checking.

Despite several cadets vowing that they would never undertake another expedition after having

suffered blisters from hiking through abnormally cold, windy and even snowy weather on the North Yorkshire Moors, they invariably come back for more.

And, more importantly, they ended up being justifiably proud of their achievements.

## Yorkshire at Bristol in Portsmouth

IT WAS an early start for a number of units in the Yorkshire area as staff and cadets boarded coaches for Portsmouth and their summer camp on board HMS Bristol.

Months of planning had gone into organising the training and logistics for the cadets and, apart from an unexpected detour on the M6, all arrived on board by early evening for safety briefings before being shown to their messes.

For some it was their first time away from home, while for others it was a chance to catch up with old friends from other parts of Eastern Area.

There followed a busy week of training, including sailing, pulling, power boating, seamanship, navigation, engineering, WT, first aid, writer/stores and, for some, their PO/LC boards.

Staff and cadets from Canada, America, Singapore, Hong Kong, Bermuda, Belgium and Sweden were also hosted for the week, and it was not all work – most cadets took the chance to visit HMS Victory and the RM Museum.

## Boat man gets Force medal

THE man who looks after boats for cadets in the South of England has been awarded the Cadet Forces Medal for 12 years of exemplary service in the Corps.

Lt (SCC) Michael Izzard RNR is the Southern Area Boats Maintainer, based at HMS Excellent in Whale Island.

Before that he was a CPO MEA(H) in the Royal Navy, serving for 28 years before joining the Corps on his retirement.

In his time with the Corps he has repaired, maintained and renovated a huge number of sailing craft, but his speciality lies in refurbishing Bosun dinghies which he can rebuild almost from scratch.

Mick says: "Like many bosuns I knew in the Navy, these boats are solid workhorses that are built to last."

## New chaplain

BARNESLEY unit has a new chaplain, Fr Peter Needham.

Father Peter joined the unit after the last chaplain moved to North Yorkshire.

He is not new to the dark blue uniform, as he was formerly a Royal Navy chaplain.

Father Peter is parish priest of St Luke's Grimethorpe and St Paul's Brierley, and lives in Grimethorpe with his two dogs Mary and Joseph, and his chickens.

## Bridge work

STAFF and cadets from Stamford Endowed School and CCF paid a visit to HMS Collingwood in Fareham to take a closer look at the Royal Navy.

One highlight was a session in the hi-tech bridge simulator in Endeavour Building, used to help train navigators and to foster teamwork in ships' command teams.

## Internationals look to the East

EASTERN area has hosted the International Sea Cadet Exchange Programme for this year.

Early in August some 40 cadets and staff from Bermuda, Belgium, Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore, Sweden, South Korea and the United States joined the Eastern Area summer camp on board HMS Bristol.

During their visit the British and international cadets took part in a number of activities and tours, including a look at HMS Victory and a visit to Action Stations in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, as well as undertaking tasks such as leadership exercises.

Lt (SCC) Michelle Welsh RNR, CO of Nottingham unit, has hosted the overseas visitors for the past three years, and this time they had a chance to go on board the unit's affiliated destroyer HMS Nottingham.

The international contingent then joined the South West Marine Camp, which included trips to BRNC and the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton.

Nottingham also sent a couple of their members overseas to other international exchanges – POC Wilkinson went to Hong Kong and POC Sills to Canada.

## London units blaze fire safety trail



● London cadets dress up for the occasion

CADETS from Southwark, City of London and Greenwich units were chosen to take part in the Community Fire Safety Ambassadors initiative, organised and sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Firefighters.

Instructors from each unit attended training sessions at Westminster University, followed up by training sessions with groups of ten cadets from each unit at Southwark fire station.

Unit staff also delivered extra training during normal parade nights.

Although it was a lot of fun, there was also plenty of hard work involved, with the conclusion of the Fire Safety and Awareness Course being a test to assess learning and understanding.

## Nick nominated for award in recognition of dedication

A YOUNG man who dedicates much of his spare time to running a Sea Cadet unit has been nominated for a 'Yohey' – a Citygate Young People of the Year award in Buckinghamshire.

Nick Jones was nominated by his long-suffering girlfriend Jodie

Hall, who said he deserved the award, even though it means she hardly sees him.

This is the first year for the awards, which promote positive role models among the young.

Nick joined Marlow unit 14 years ago at the age of ten, and enjoyed it so much he stayed on at 18 as an adult instructor.

When the CO of Marlow emigrated to Australia two years ago, Nick took over. With Nick's two other adult instructors aged only 20, he believes Marlow has the youngest managed sea cadets in the country.

Nick lives in High Wycombe and commutes daily to London, where he works as a transport expert for an international consultancy.

But after work he often heads straight to the unit, only going home after an evening of cadet activities, and he gives up at least two weekends a month plus other time for courses.

"The Sea Cadets offered me many, many opportunities which would not have been available to me otherwise," said Nick.

"I stay now because of the excellent opportunity to give something back to the unit that I grew up in."



## Safe work boosts unit finances

WHITEHAVEN unit's coffers received a welcome boost thanks to safe working at the Sellafield nuclear complex.

At the end of every accident-free month, the contractors on Sellafield's SPRS project make a cash donation to good causes nominated by the workers.

Presenting a cheque for £750, Mickey Fowler from the SPRS project said: "Safety is our number one priority at work and this scheme benefits everyone."

"Knowing that the various good causes we support will receive much-needed funds encourages everyone to do just that little bit extra."

"The Sea Cadets are very well known and always willing to help out in the local community."

"They were a popular choice and I am delighted that we have been able to support them this month."

Whitehaven CO Lt (SCC) Peter Lucas RNR thanked Mickey and his colleagues for their generosity.

## Train connection

A RUNNER who was seeking a charity to support in the Great North Run agreed to raise funds for the Barnsley unit.

Michael Train appealed in the *Barnsley Chronicle* for a worthy cause, and when the article was pointed out to unit CO CPO (SCC) Caroline Devonport, she contacted Michael and he agreed.

Cadets and unit supporters immediately leaped into action to seek sponsorship and generally support Michael, who finished in a time of just under two hours.

# Rebels to the rescue as yacht capsizes

TWO men were hauled to safety from rough seas by sea cadets and instructors from TS Rebel.

The team was undertaking competition training in racing yacht Smokey Too in windy conditions off Felixstowe when they spotted another boat in trouble.

A strong gust of wind caught and capsized the other sailing vessel, throwing the two men into the sea.

The cadets, who form part of TS Rebel's offshore racing team, immediately went into Man Overboard drill and pulled the two men to safety – no mean feat in rough sea conditions with winds gusting up to 35mph.

Harwich inshore lifeboat later towed the disabled yacht to Shotley Marina.

PO Lee Thurlow, skipper of Smokey Too, said: "We regularly train for man overboard incidents so the boat handling was easy."

"The difficult bit was getting two waterlogged adults in all their foul weather gear up and over the side of our boat."

He added: "Our young cadets responded really well during the rescue – I am very proud of their conduct."

Another Corps vessel, Thames Fueller, was also involved in the incident, providing relay



● Rescue team – back row: AC James Everett (Walton-on-the-Naze), LC Josh Syrett (Colchester), PO Dean Woodberry (TS Rebel), PO Lee Thurlow (TS Rebel – Skipper). Front row: AC Ben Chandler (Clacton), Harry Slade (Walton-on-the-Naze), AC Glen Arrowsmith (Colchester)

communications to the Coastguard marine rescue centre.

Anthony Mayhew, Watch Manager at Thames Coastguard, said: "The prompt and competent action by the Sea Cadet yacht did much to ensure the survival of the

two casualties, and it's good to see young people acting in such a professional manner."

Smokey Too and Thames Fueller are both attached to the TS Rebel Cadet Sea School, whose HQ is based at Titchmarsh

Marina, Walton-on-the-Naze.

TS Rebel is a coastal training station, providing a range of sailing and powerboat training for around 350 sea cadets each season.

www.tsrebel.co.uk

## Back and Forth to pick up skills

SCARBOROUGH units cadets made the most of the summer weather (what day was that? – Ed) to get out on the water and notch up some qualifications.

Cdts Nick Holt and Stephen Gaines got the ball rolling with a stint at the National Sea Cadet training centre on the Forth.

Sailing Laser Picos under the Forth bridges made a big impression, and both said they cannot wait to return to Scotland.

Stephen barely had a chance to draw breath before he and fellow cadet Richard Fletcher completed a practice walk for their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award.

The focus then moved back to the Forth with a few days of power boating out of Port Edgar Marina on South Queensferry Bay.

Cadets Pottage and Halkyard bagged RYA Power Level 1 certificates while Richard Fletcher and OC Tom Hunter took Levels 1 and 2.

Next it was the turn of the unit OIC, CPO (SCC) Julie Davies, who joined TS Royalist in Liverpool in preparation for the Tall Ships Race from Northern Ireland to Norway.

More cadets went out in boats on Wykeham Lakes, with eight gaining pulling qualifications and points towards advancement through the Sea Cadet ranks.

Onshore, LC Stuart Barker attended a course at HMS Caledonia, learning how to instruct static drill, SA80 rifle drill, pace stick drill and sword drill.

Caledonia was also the venue for a seamanship course attended by three cadets, at which they worked on ropework and rigging, among other subjects.

Back on the water, and back at Wykeham Lakes, four cadets notched up RYA Level 1 power boating qualifications, thanks in part to the presence of an instructor from Barry unit who worked with PO Karen Moreman.

And the summer was rounded off by the district boating weekend, where a further three cadets gained the RYA Level 1 power boating certificate, five attained their supervised coxswain pulling badges and three qualified for their coxswain's certificate.

## Helpers are a credit to Bradford

A NUMBER of cadets from the Bradford unit have helped with fund-raising activities for the Royal British Legion.

The cadets went around the local area collecting with a bucket for the RBL, fetched and carried for the ex-service organisation, handed out promotional leaflets, manned a small Sea Cadet Corps recruiting stand and helped out wherever there was a need.

Some of the cadets were introduced to the Lord Mayor of Bradford, and were congratulated by him for their cheerfulness and enthusiasm.

Two of the units were even interviewed by the local radio station, and were photographed with the two Chelsea Pensioners who attended the weekend.

The ten cadets and two staff were the biggest group there beside the Territorial Army, who manned a field kitchen and fed everyone who attended.

It wasn't all work, as the cadets took part in a quiz about Bradford and all the cadets got a prize for completing the quiz.

They had numerous goes on the climbing wall and, all things considered, had a very enjoyable day.

The cadets were a credit to Bradford and the cadet organisation, eliciting many complimentary comments from all quarters.

# Norwich enjoys best of the Fest

SHOPPERS at the Chapelfield Centre in Norwich were treated to the best of the Corps at the latest SeaCadetFest.

The two-day event allowed Eastern Area cadets to demonstrate their skills in seamanship and other areas to the public of the city.

The festival attracted units from as far away as Stevenage and Bedford, and members of the public were encouraged to get involved with the many displays which included indoor rowing, first aid, marine engineering and drill.

Much fun was had as many people were shown how to tie knots, have a go at the Royal Marines rolling rock-climbing wall, and try boat rigging.

The event started with a short parade, followed by the Colours ceremony to mark the beginning of the festival.

Displays also included club swinging, cooking and stewarding skills, band performances and hornpipe dancing.

Children were invited to take part in a treasure hunt, spotting items of sea cadet uniform hidden throughout the centre, while there was an indoor rowing competition for adults.

There was also a chance for the public to win a day for four on the training ship Royalist, a 29m square-rigged sailing brig which can accommodate 24 cadets.

And a sponsored abseil outside raised money for the local air ambulance service, the Royal Marines Benevolent Fund and the Marine Society and Sea Cadets.

Among the people watching the festival unfold was Capt Jonathan Fry RN, the Captain of the Sea Cadet Corps, who represents the formal link between the Corps and the Royal Navy.

Norfolk is an obvious location for such an event, as seafaring in the county can be traced back well before famous sailors like Lord Nelson, who came from the north Norfolk village of Burnham Thorpe.



● Captain of the Sea Cadets Capt Jonathan Fry speaks to junior members of the Corps at Chapelfield shopping centre (above), while passing shoppers are oblivious to the challenges of navigating a dinghy through the busy centre (left)



## Sea time beckons

PROBATIONARY PO Laura Frudd is packing in as much activity as possible before she heads out for her first taste of working life at sea.

Laura (18), formerly a POC at Barnsley unit, joined the staff there in January.

After having been accepted into the RFA, she attended BRNC at Dartmouth, as an Officer Cadet (X) on a seven-week course that saw Laura take part in activities such as boat handling, adventurous training, helicopter rides and attending mess dinners.

Passing out from Britannia was a very proud day for Laura and her family despite the miserable conditions.

Shortly after, Laura took to the skies again, this time strapped to a stranger in a small aircraft, her intention being to make a tandem parachute jump for the unit.

After two attempts, the first day had to be called off because of the weather, but soon after Laura jumped from 15,000ft above Lincolnshire.

All went well during their descent, and Laura has now decided that she would like to take up skydiving as a hobby.

In September, Laura started at Warsash Maritime College, and as Navy News went to press she was waiting to join her first ship for six months in the Caribbean.



# The first and the last (MI)6 of the best

ELDERLY cruiser HMS Crescent took a horrendous pounding as she floundered in the North Sea in November 1914, and many feared she would not survive the night.

But it was not the guns or torpedoes of the damned Hun that worried the officers and men of Crescent – it was their oldest enemy, Mother Nature.

Mention World War I and the mind conjures up an Armageddon of trenches, barbed wire, blasted trees and mangled, shell-shredded corpses.

The woes of Tommy have been well-documented and depicted – but not so Jack.

Indeed, apart from Jutland and Gallipoli – neither of them the glorious Naval victory expected by the British public – the blue aspect of the Great War has tended to be overshadowed by the khaki.

So the detailed observations, thoughts, hopes and fears of Midshipman Alex 'Toby' Scrimgeour in *Scrimgeour's Small Scribbling Diary 1914-1916* (Comway, £20 ISBN 9781844860753) provide a welcome and fascinating glimpse of life in the Senior Service during the war, and of the mindset of a stratum of British society during a conflict more terrifying than most thought possible.

Scrimgeour (pictured below) enjoyed a privileged upbringing – his father was a successful stockbroker – and the eloquent young snotty carries with him the mores and attitudes of the Edwardian society which moulded him, which to some appears to be a grating superiority and class-conscious snobbery. But that effortless and intrinsic superciliousness ultimately makes Toby's progress and fate all the more poignant.

The details of the November storm are typical of Toby's journals – midshipmen were obliged to keep such documents as part of their training – and illustrate the never-ending danger faced by Allied sailors.

Crescent had sailed from Busta Voe into a gale and an "unpleasantly big sea", and by the following day was hunting German minelayers off Foula in the Shetlands.

But the Germans, wisely, had stayed in port, because by the second morning out the severity of the storm prompted the Admiralty to advise all ships to seek shelter.

Crescent did not have that option, and spent eight hours crawling at a relative speed of one knot into Force 11 winds and 50ft waves, rolling up to 40 degrees each side. Turning for

home would have put her broadside to the tempest, almost certainly risking a capsizing.

Boats, davits, railing, wire stays, aerials and crows were ripped away – one of her two funnels barely survived – and with galleys fires and generators out of action sailors slept in sodden hammocks, ate cold food and watched by candlelight as crockery smashed and loose ammunition careened around.

Crescent finally reached harbour on the third morning of her 'patrol', to be greeted by a snowstorm – though Scrimgeour always appreciated a fine view of snow-capped mountains or a "gorgeous" sunset.

Young Toby joined the Navy as a cadet at the age of 13 in 1910, and the outbreak of war elicited a familiar bravado; on July 30 he was "pleased at the thought of the excitement of war", and on September 5, after a fruitless chase by Crescent and "spoiling for a scrap", he commented: "Those lucky devils in the army are having all they want."

"The dastardly crimes of the Germans will commit them to everlasting damnation in the blackest depths of the nethermost hell."

Patrols with the storm-battered Tenth Cruiser Squadron were frustrating, with few sightings of the enemy, and the obsolete 7,800-ton Crescent was a wretched home, more akin to Nelson's navy than that of the 20th century.

She had no fridges, so fresh food was limited and all too quickly replaced by tinned meat, chocolate and ship's biscuit, and the exertions of sailing a ship of the line had been replaced by frequent and unpopular coaling, a filthy, back-breaking chore.

But Toby casts his eye wider than just ship-board life.

There are waspish pen portraits (Admiral de Chair is "a bit of an old woman", while First Sea Lord Jackie Fisher is dismissed as "rather a cad"), and a sense of the paranoia of the time as anyone regarded as acting oddly is assumed to be a spy.

Genuine spies found that justice was swift and merciless; on October 28 1914 a Reserve Paymaster was court-martialled as a German spy, sentenced to death and executed within a couple of hours while his flotilla called in at Olna Voe in Shetland.

"This is the way we do things in the Service," Scrimgeour concluded. "His crime was a blot against the honour of all Naval officers, but it must be remembered he was only temporarily entered for the war two months ago and was not a real NO [naval officer] at all."

In between gruelling patrols, glimpses of Toby's other life abound. There was a seemingly endless supply of grouse from family on Shetland (which did Scrimgeour's standing in the wardroom no harm at all), as well as chances to go fishing.

A two-week refit for Crescent gave Toby the chance to do the rounds in London and visit his home near Canterbury, dining out with families and friends, managing a little shooting and "pleasant flirtations" with Joko (the book's love interest – she "has

got an awful 'pash' for me now – not permanent, I expect" though her hair could do with being longer, in Toby's forthright opinion).

Entries such as those for November 26 1914 ("Woke up late and had rather a rumpus with daddy, and consequently stayed at home all day, wasting a precious day like an ass") remind us that this warrior was still just 17, and could still act like a teenager.

The sharp contrast between the proud, jingoistic sailor and smooth-tongued socialite fades during 1915 as the realisation dawns that the war will drag on, and even a move to the glamorous state-of-the-art battle-cruiser HMS Invincible fails to rekindle the devil-may-care attitude of the previous year.

Toby's journal ends in December 1915, (the 1916 version presumably lies 200ft deep in the North Sea) and his final letters home give a sketchier coverage of Toby's dwindling life.

They are still, however, alive with a familiar blend of military tittle-tattle and the minutiae of family life.

His final letter, on May 28, 1916, contains an inconsequential observation on Dickens' *Bleak House*, and Toby signs off with "No more now."

There was to be no more. The remaining letters in the book are from third parties lamenting the loss of yet another young life.

Toby's first encounter with the enemy, on Trafalgar Day in 1914, had elicited a typically British response as the shells from a German armed raider whistled over: "It was very exciting yesterday when we were fired on."

"None of us have been under gunfire before. I was in the gun-room having tea at the time, and was too busy to notice much else when the bugle sounded off GQs for action."

But he finally got his wish to engage the enemy more closely on May 31 1916 at the Battle of Jutland, and he paid with his life as Invincible blew up and sank in less than two minutes, taking all but six of her ship's company of more than 1,020 with her.

This book helps open a window on the Navy's contribution to World War I, and puts a very human face on a prolonged, often tedious and faceless mechanical war at sea.

THERE are many accolades and adjectives used to describe Henry Allingham (pictured below).

Britain's oldest man... Britain's oldest veteran... Britain's oldest aviator.

Now add 'Britain's oldest author' to the list, for at the tender age of 112 he has recounted his life story to long-time friend and champion of Great War veterans, Dennis Goodwin in *Kitchener's Last Volunteer* (Mainstream, £17.99 ISBN 978-1-84596-416-0).

Today Henry Allingham is defined by (a) his age and (b) his Great War service... and that's a little unfair.

For Henry lived a remarkable life long before he became fêted as one of the dwindling band on WWI survivors.

His job as a car mechanic ensured that he owned a car long before it became the norm, he loved sailing with his family in his boat The Teale, and visited the USA after his daughter moved there with her American husband post war.

The bulk of his memoirs are devoted to the Great War – and besides leading a varied life, Henry Allingham led a varied military career.

He volunteered for the RNAS in 1915. He asked for a posting to East Africa. Perhaps the recruiter misheard. He was sent to East Anglia as an air mechanic, second class.

And here Henry plugs a gap, for first-hand accounts of aviation are invariably pilot-centric. Lower-deck accounts, especially of the Great War, are scarce.

Officer or rating, the life of a WWI aviator was often brief, certainly hazardous, always cold.

"You'd smear Vaseline on your face – if that wasn't available then it was whale oil or engine grease. You wore gloves to protect you from frostbite. You were flying in an open cockpit with only a small windshield for protection," Henry recalls.

And yet, aviation was "a great adventure for a bloke like me". As soon as his flimsy aircraft touched down, the mechanic was "just itching to take off again".

Henry is trumpeted in naval circles as the last survivor of the Royal Naval Air Service (precursor to the Fleet Air Arm) and the last survivor of Jutland. His ship, Kingfisher, spent the battle "on the periphery" – all he saw were the muzzle flashes of guns in the distance. Like most British sailors on May 31 1916, Henry Allingham found it "impossible to tell what was going on".

His sea-going career ended in the autumn of 1917 when he transferred to the Western Front with No.12 Squadron RNAS. Battle over land proved no more enlightening than battle over sea – "jungle drums" about the situation at the front.

And although he never served in the trenches in France, life was far from safe or comfortable in the air stations behind the front.

"We slept where we could, often under a lorry – it was a case of dropping down on the ground with a blanket," Henry writes.

"There were food and supply dumps behind the lines – there was an unwritten agreement that they were never bombed. One day the Germans broke the code and shelled our dumps. They suffered a terrible retribution as we shelled their dumps for a week. It never occurred again."

That was during the spring of 1918 – when the Germans made their bid for victory and when the RNAS was swallowed up by the new Royal Air Force.

Today, Henry is the sole survivor of the first days of the RAF – and he is courted by the Crabs. At the time, however, he concedes: "I still considered myself a Royal Navy man."

A generation later, and with Britain at war again, Henry was working for Ford at Dagenham... alongside Malcolm and Donald Campbell of Bluebird fame. The latter was "a driven man" – and an affable one; the mechanic and the record breaker would regularly chat over lunch.

It is these vignettes which make you realise there is so much more to Henry Allingham than his wartime service.

Indeed, if anyone has lived a full life, it is Henry (he played golf until he was 90 and cycled when he was 100). And he continues to lead a full life; last year, the 112-year-old attended 47 events.

Most had a Great War connection – and the media never fails to ask Henry about his wartime experiences, yet the veteran apparently never tires of passing on his knowledge and wisdom to today's generation.

Among those to benefit were naval aviators earning their Wings at RNAS Yeovilton. Then Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Adrian Johns watched as the centenarian pressed the famous insignia on to their sleeves and spoke into their ears.

"It was quite clear that Henry was passing on something much more profound than just a cloth flying badge," the admiral recalled.

"Something else was being passed between the generations."

We can learn a lot from Henry Allingham: honour, respect, tradition, duty, bravery. And we'd be wise to heed the advice he gave to Admiral Johns (a mere whippersnapper at half his age): "Don't look back, just look forward."

THE most notable action of the naval side of the British intervention against the Bolsheviks in 1919 was the attack on the key Soviet naval base at Kronstadt, writes Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford.

In the early hours of August 18, Royal Navy coastal motor boats (CMBs) crippled two Soviet battleships and a submarine depot ship and effectively neutralised the Bolshevik fleet.

This is often confused with the sinking two months earlier of the cruiser Oleg by Lt Augustus ('Gus') Agar, commanding CMB 4. The Soviet ship had just completed bombarding into submission the Krasnaya Gorka fortress, that had declared for the Whites in the Civil War that followed the October Revolution.

Agar had played a key role in demonstrating the utility of the CMB in Baltic conditions and played an important part in the Kronstadt raid, adding a DSO to the VC he received for the Oleg episode. But that was not the reason for Agar's initial deployment to the theatre – to support MI6 agents in their operations to obtain information on what was actually going on in the chaos of revolutionary Russia.

The British intelligence operation in Bolshevik Russia had been started by Capt Francis Cromie, CO of one of the RN submarines employed in the Baltic in the Great War.

The Bolsheviks were, however, able to destroy his network and MI6 sent Paul Dukes (pictured bottom right) to try to replace it. Dukes was a musician who had studied in St Petersburg and who had later been employed by the government in an official organisation designed to foster Russian friendship during WWI.

This eventually led, in the summer of 1918, to recruitment by MI6, or as it was then, the Foreign Section of the British Secret Service Bureau. By May 1919, Dukes was effectively the only British agent in Russia and his survival was a matter of importance in bureaucratic as well as raw intelligence terms. His survival was key to the survival of the Service itself. So it was, that the first 'C', Capt Mansfield Cumming, clutched at the straw of Agar's CMBs to provide an escape route.

So begins this enthralling new book – *Operation Kronstadt: The Greatest True Tale Of Espionage To Come Out Of The Early Years Of MI6* (Hutchinson £18.99, ISBN 9780091786211) – by former MI6 agent and 'spy book' author Harry Ferguson. Skilfully he weaves the stories of Agar and the CMBs and Dukes and his spying. The book reads like a spy thriller, but as the copious references prove, it is a substantially-researched piece of historical writing.

Given the book's nature as 'thriller', one is a little reluctant to tell how it ends up, but the result is a generally happy one for both heroes. Dukes eventually got a knighthood and is the only MI6 agent ever to be so honoured for 'work in the field'. Agar went on to command HMS Dorsetshire, act as prosecutor in the HMS Manchester court martial and head the Royal Naval College, Greenwich. Both also wrote highly-interesting books which Ferguson has used carefully and critically.

Ferguson is highly critical of MI6, and one can detect something of an 'agenda' on the author's part. This does not spoil the book, however; indeed it adds an interesting edge to a work which, while professionally researched, is not meant to be 'academic' in the narrow sense.

There may well be a case to answer on serious errors and blunders in MI6's first decade. Secret organisations can all too easily hide behind their essential secrecy. One now knows what questions to ask when more official accounts appear.

The only real defect in the book, and again it is far from a 'show stopper',

## The Grove Review

is the author's unfamiliarity with the warships of the time. Petropavlovsk and Andrei Pervozvanni were not 'battle-cruisers' but battleships and the latter, not the former, was the 'pre-dreadnought'. Oleg was a protected cruiser, not an armoured cruiser; she had recently had her original armament 12 6in guns (as quoted by the author) replaced with 16 of the latest 5.1in weapons, giving her the firepower of one of the modern Russian light cruisers whose completion had been delayed by the Revolution.

There are a few other niggling mistakes too; the Griffin was not a Sopwith aircraft like the Strutter or the Camel, but was known as the Grain Griffin, having been developed at the naval aircraft establishment on the Isle of Grain. It was a new aircraft and hardly 'obsolete'.

More importantly, the book accurately brings out the confusions and uncertainties in British policy at the time. One is left with the distinct feeling that a more robust policy might have made all the difference in tipping the scales against the Bolsheviks. As Ferguson clearly shows, their terroristic excesses were already setting the scene for the most murderous regime in European history. It was a pity that it could not have been nipped in the bud.

Much was left to officers on the spot and Ferguson demonstrates how Agar on his own initiative (and against MI6 instructions) decided to try to relieve Krasnaya Gorka by attempting an attack on the two Russian battleships which had begun the shelling of its hapless defenders.

Sadly, the attack had to be aborted, because of underwater damage to his companion CMB 7. By the time Oleg was sunk the following night it was too late. The fort had just fallen, its defenders and their families were shot and buried alive by Bolshevik forces led by an up-and-coming Communist leader, Josef Stalin, who was starting as he meant to go on.

The RN flag officer, the fire-eating Walter Cowan, had not specifically authorised the attack, but he had told Agar on their first meeting to "always choose the boldest course". He was as good as his word and far from reprimanding Agar, recommended him for the VC.

By the time of the Kronstadt attack, warlike action had been specifically authorised by London. Yet, as Ferguson points out, enhanced British support could not overcome the ineffectiveness of the Whites, whose Russian nationalistic suspicions of British support for the independence of Finland and the Baltic states led them sometimes to sabotage the British assistance they were receiving.

It is so pleasant to be able to recommend a book as much as I do this excellent, entertaining and informative work. It is genuinely hard to put down and the author is to be congratulated. Read it!



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## Tar for the memories

ROY and Lesley Adkins possess that rare knack among historians: merging the academic with the narrative and providing a riveting read which also casts light where it is dark.

After excellent accounts of Trafalgar and the Napoleonic Wars, the duo focus not on admirals and generals, but on the ordinary fighting man – or rather extraordinary man – who was the backbone of the Royal Navy in *Jack Tar: Life in Nelson's Navy* (Little Brown, £20 ISBN 978-1408700549).

What perhaps is surprising is that although 'Nelson's navy' pre-dates universal education by a good three generations, *Jack Tars* were rather more erudite than you might expect.

They left copious accounts of life in the days of sail. Some were published at the time, some in later life, some posthumously. And some have lain in archives scattered across the globe.

The authors have tapped this myriad of sources – published or otherwise – to paint a comprehensive picture of the trials, tribulations and titillations of the men who gave the Royal Navy an aura of invincibility.

*Jack Tar* is often a stereotypical figure: a press-ganged Jack the Lad who enjoys his grog, receives a few lashes for outspoken remarks, beds a girl in every port, yet is resilient and professional in battle.

Such stereotypes are heavily grounded in fact. But the authors dig deeper. They recount the training the men received, food (and, of course, grog) aboard, describe the women of Plymouth who threw themselves at the sailors of HMS *Temeraire* on pay day, dismiss the image of jolly Jack singing shanties while performing his daily duties (silence was invariably the order of the day), outline the privations faced by RN prisoners held in Verdun and the horrors of 19th-Century surgery at sea.

The horrors of surgery invariably followed the horrors of battle. A century later, men would be torn apart, decapitated or hideously scarred by shrapnel in the castles of steel at Jutland. War in the wooden walls was no less brutal, as James Scott found when he boarded the French ship *Guerrrière* at the Battle of the Nile.

"The blood-stained planks of the quarterdeck bore ample testimony to the accuracy of our fire, but on descending to the main deck a scene of slaughter presented itself which converted our feelings of triumph into those of horror and dismay," he recalled.

"The disfigured and mangled bodies of our gallant foes were scattered in many a heap around. The main deck was slippery with blood and gore."

Marines (later *Royal Marines*) were also at the heart of these battles. They were volunteers, not pressed men, enticed by the promise of "fortune in that highly renowned Corps". More than anything money, not a sense of duty or even adventure, was the principal draw for red jackets for, as one bill poster during the American Wars of Independence proclaimed, "every Thing that swims the Seas must be a PRIZE!"

Overall, this is as comprehensive – and lively – an account of the life of *Jack Tar* as you could hope to find.

# Fire for effect

**FOR 'unpopular' wars, Iraq and Afghanistan are proving increasingly popular with publishers.**

There has been a flurry of books recently – Adrian Orchard's impressive account of Harrier operations, Mike Rossiter's lively retelling of the commandos' role in Iraq, a spate of Apache-related works.

The red berets are enjoying a spell in the limelight thanks to the excellent Patrick Bishop.

And the men of 3 Commando Brigade can have no finer chronicler than Falklands veteran, former Royal and historian Ewen Southby-Tailyour.

With the green berets grappling once again with the Taleban, Southby-Tailyour fixes his sights on the Royals' 2006-07 tour of duty to Helmand – a tour of duty labeled "among the finest pieces of soldiering I have come across" by Chief of the General Staff General Sir Richard Dannatt.

Such an exalted deployment deserves a first-rate chronicle. It gets one in **3 Commando Brigade: Helmand, Afghanistan** (Ebury, £18.99 ISBN 978-0-09-192695-3), based on scores of interviews and eyewitness accounts.

Historians may wish to debate the whys and wherefores of our role in Afghanistan, argue over tactics and strategy, but as ever it all comes down to the men in the front line.

And it is upon them that the author focuses his attention – he calls his book "a discrete snapshot of events seen through the eyes of some of those who took part".

Just to give you an idea of the challenge the commandos face in Helmand, bear these facts in mind.

The province is "roughly half the size of England with a population about the same as Devon". Temperatures range from 45°C in high summer to -15°C in winter.

There were 54 separate or ongoing operations during 3 Commando's deployment – 42 Commando alone was engaged on 520 occasions by insurgents (and that's not counting the mortar and RPG attacks its bases were frequently subjected to).

If there is a stand-out action, then it is probably the raid on Jugroom Fort, a Taleban stronghold.

The assault on the rambling fortification near Garmsir epitomises war – and war in Helmand

in particular. Dust. Smoke. Confusion. Explosions. Death. Tracer. Near-misses. Determination. Bravery.

The Apache rescue of the body of L/Cpl Mathew Ford has received – and receives here too – considerable coverage in books and in the media.

But there was much more to the battle than that daring mission.

One RPG struck the ground and bounced harmlessly off a Royal's helmet. Small-arms fire criss-crossed the compounds of Jugroom, while grenades were tossed into rooms where Taleban fought to the last round.

The clerk of Zulu Company fired off 500 rounds alone that morning. There was, as one green beret succinctly put it, "so much shit flying around".

The assault on Jugroom – Operation Glacier Two – was among the fiercest firefights of the six-month deployment.

The attack was assisted by a myriad of battlefield technology: Apache gunships, Nimrod spy planes, Desert Hawk eye-in-the-sky drones.

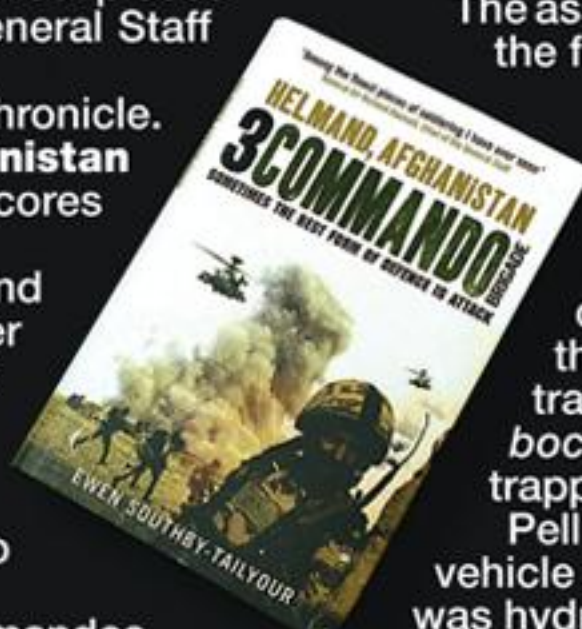
But the raw experiences of the men going into battle had changed little in six decades. When a mine detonated beneath C/Sgt Maj Marty Pelling's Viking, the reaction of the troops was no different from troops trapped in Cromwells and Shermans in the Normandy bocage: "Please let the door open, don't let me be trapped."

Pelling finally forced his way out of the crippled armoured vehicle and saw red liquid pouring on to the Helmand earth. It was hydraulic fluid, not the blood of driver 'Robbo' Robertson, who turned calmly to Pelling: "Take a picture, Sarge. No-one will believe I didn't get blown up in this."

Such incidents invariably provoke some choice Anglo-Saxon. Southby-Tailyour pulls no punches, either with his choice of language or with his descriptions of combat. This is war, after all, not a game of cricket.

And, above all, it is a lasting record of the Royals' bravery and achievements in Helmand, immortalised in print. As is the name of one unfortunate green beret: Johnny Poo Tash, a strapping Irish fellow who for all his ability in battle simply couldn't grow a moustache.

It was probably the least of his concerns in Helmand...



## Also arriving in bookshops

THE latest in Osprey's nicely-illustrated New Vanguard series – which focuses on the machinery of war through the ages – looks at the 20th Century RN.

**British Submarines 1939-45** (ISBN 978-1-84603-007-9) and **British Battlecruisers 1914-18** (ISBN 978-1-84603-008-6), both £9.50, are good 'entry level' books on their subjects.

Colour plates and cutaway diagrams are a feature of the series – and particularly striking is the artist's impression of the wreck of HMS *Invincible*.

Blown up at Jutland, the battle-cruiser split in two; nine decades later only the forecabin and forward turret are recognisable – the rest of the ship is a mangled mess.

Doyen of U-boat historians Lawrence Paterson has focused much of his recent efforts on the swansong of the German *U-boatwaffe*.

**Dönitz's Last Gamble** (Seaford, £25 ISBN 978-1-84415-714-3) concentrates on the German admiral's efforts to find a new strategy after the failure of the Battle of the Atlantic: U-boats lurking close to the shores of the UK and striking seemingly at will against Allied shipping.

This 'inshore' campaign perturbed the Admiralty who feared it would lose up to 90 ships every month.

In a profusely-illustrated work, Paterson looks at the technological leaps made by the Kriegsmarine – and Allied attempts to counter them.

And finally... if quirky is 'your thing' – or if you like dropping in facts at dinner parties, then Donough O'Brien and Anthony Weldon's **Numeroids** (Bene Factum, £9.99 ISBN 978-1-903071-182) is a compendium of numerical facts... including a good few nautical ones.

Such as the number of trees felled to make HMS *Victory* (3,400) or ships sunk during the Dunkirk evacuation (200 out of 693).

And one to bow out with: ten – the number of times larger the US defence budget is than the British one (a staggering \$689bn – £392bn).

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**ON 21 APRIL, 1943,** the German destroyer ZG 3 *Hermes* sank the RN submarine HMS *Splendid* south of Capri in the Mediterranean. We are looking for veterans or relatives of those who served on the *Splendid*. Contact: Ward Carr, Kaiser-Sigmund-Strasse 13, 60320 Frankfurt, Germany. Tel: (49) 69-5600 5788. Email: [wardcarr@aol.com](mailto:wardcarr@aol.com)

● **Fire for effect...** Commandos fire 81mm mortars at Taleban positions near Garmsir

Picture: PO(Phot) Sean Clee, RN Photographer of the Year (again)







● **Pleased as punch...** CPO Smith shows his delight  
Picture: Richard Owens

## James is a hit in the Balearics

CYCLIST CPO James Smith bagged an impressive sixth place in a gruelling island road race.

The senior rate, based at HMS Raleigh, was a member of a four-man team competing in the Balearic Islands International Masters Cycling event in Majorca.

The race, which is now in its 11th year, is run on a stage basis similar to the Tour de France.

CPO Smith raced in the Master 30 category, which required him to complete nearly 300km in four days (also taking in some of the highest peaks on the island).

Competing against other national amateurs, including teams from Germany and Denmark, he managed third place in one of the intermediate sprints to wear the sprinter's green jersey.

The senior rating was the only representative of the RN taking part in the race, riding with a semi-professional trade team which included three other experienced UK cyclists.

"The race around Majorca went well although one stage had to be cut short because of torrential rain," said the 36-year-old cyclist.

"Overall I was really pleased with my performance and so was my team leader and I've now been asked to ride the tour of Ireland and the tour of Majorca next year."

# World class

THIS year's World Duathlon Championships were held in Rimini, Italy, with two RN athletes competing for the Great Britain age group team.

The first was the experienced Lt Nathan Gosling (25-29 group), fresh off deployment and already with the European title under his belt this year.

In addition this year there was a new recruit Surg Lt Gordon Irvine (age group 30-34) who qualified earlier in the year as a civilian and now flies the RN colours.

The course set has been tried and tested in previous international competition and was intended to involve a winding 10km run around the harbour, a 40km cycle ride, comprising six laps down the main beach front and finishing with a further 5km run round the harbour.

Closer examination of the course however revealed some discrepancies with distances – including possibly a substantially longer run than advertised.

Both athletes had prepared meticulously for this event and their form going into the race was apparent.

In the lead up to the event the weather was proving more adverse than expected with temperatures dropping to the low 'teens', intermittent showers and onshore gusts causing concern regards the ability to handle the deep section wheels used in such an event.

Fortunately come race day all turned out well to the relief of both competitors and spectators alike with clear skies and a reasonable temperature.

Both athletes started well during what proved to be a physical jostle for positioning in a field of over 250 international competitors.

Lt Gosling immediately settled in high up the

field with Surg Lt Irvine not far behind.

The pace for the first few kilometres proved to be fast and the surgeon used this time to reduce the distance to Lt Gosling, hitting the half-way mark neck-and-neck and in good overall position.

From here the two worked well together gaining valuable positions and overall time. Gosling dropped back only towards the later stages to leave Irvine to enter transition with a reasonable lead over his team mate.

On to the bike both RN competitors were making good progress and appeared to be faring well towards the top end of the field.

A great deal of work has been done by both athletes throughout the season on bike strength and this proved invaluable.

Gosling once again showed his dominance in this discipline over his team mate and was able to substantially increase his lead again within just two of the six laps. Surg Lt Irvine held on well though and entered transition only a few seconds down.

The final run of 5km always proves to be a mental and physical challenge and after a gruelling ride with no let up, the two Royal Navy athletes entered the run in solid positions overall. Despite pending cramps in both athletes they grasped their positions firmly with neither being able to pull any distance back on the other. They indeed recorded identical times for this run.

Both athletes produced very solid performances with Lt Nathan Gosling recording a time of 2h 4m 46s to claim seventh place in his age group and Surg Lt Gordon Irvine only 34 seconds behind in 2h 5m 20s claiming 18th position in his grouping.

● **Lt Nathan Gosling pounds the Rimini roads** just feet ahead of his RN comrade Surg Lt Gordon Irvine



# Coach tour of Montserrat



● **'Can I have my ball back please, mister?'**... Iron Duke's footballing coaches share their love of the sport with children on Montserrat  
Picture: LA(Phot) Jay Allen, FRPU East

HMS Iron Duke spread the word of the beautiful game when her footballers offered coaching to youngsters in Montserrat.

LPT 'Taff' Rees took a team of four players – CPO(AWW) 'Muddy' Waters, CPO(ET) 'Billy' Fish, PO(CIS) 'Paul' Adkins and LS(AWW) 'Spud' Murphy – to Brades Primary School, where 51 children were eager for some coaching.

Cricket, not football, is the number one sport in Montserrat, but in keeping with the RNFA's aim of carrying the footballing message wherever the Senior Service goes, clubz 'cooked up' a menu of passing, dribbling, heading, shooting, movement and teamwork.

"The children were very receptive to what I had taught them and enjoyed it immensely," said Spud.

"Not only did the kids enjoy it but I also enjoyed the whole day, it was a fantastic chance to give something back to the kids and also made the experience worthwhile."

Billy added: "Seeing the look of anticipation and excitement on the children's faces as we arrived at their school will be a lasting memory for me."

"They seemed genuinely excited at

the thought of playing football with a real 'England player'.

"It was an incredibly satisfying (as well as exhausting) day and I am sure we will all have lasting memories of the experience. It was also lovely to see the smiles on their faces and the innocent enthusiasm they displayed which approached with each challenge."

With Brades converted to football, the sailors clambered into a minibus and headed to the sports ground of a secondary school... whose pupils were expecting the sailors to play cricket.

Undeterred, LPT Rees stuck to his plan and soon had the children playing admirably – so admirably, indeed, that when they took on the Iron Duke in a football match, they beat the sailors by a single goal margin.

"There were two challenging and physically-demanding sessions," said Taff.

"There were so many great moments to choose from, but on a personal level, to see the children embrace our ideas and instruction, as well as witnessing the smiles and happy laughter will be a memory that all the coaches will treasure forever."

## Sid joins the skeleton staff

STALWART of the skeleton bobsleigh in the RN CPO(D) Sid Lawrence now has an even greater burden to shoulder: helping his country to gold.

The 42-year-old from Southern Diving Unit 1 in Devonport has been appointed manager and assistant coach of the GB Men's and Ladies' skeleton teams leading up to the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver (he's already been a technical adviser to the GB squad for the past two years).

Sid has been racing on skeletons (think 'tea tray') for the past two decades, represented both the RN and his country in the sport, and now manages/coaches the Navy team.

"The challenge offered me is probably the hardest – but my proudest: managing and coaching the GB skeleton team," said Sid.

"Winning Olympic medals in the 2010 winter games is the ultimate success in any sport."

Picture: LA (Phot) Jenny Lodge, FRPU West



## Paddle power

SOMEWHAT smaller than his last command... Second Sea Lord (and former Ark Royal CO) Vice Admiral Alan Massey tries kayaking drills in the pool at HMS Temeraire (pictured, right, by LA(Phot) Luron Wright).

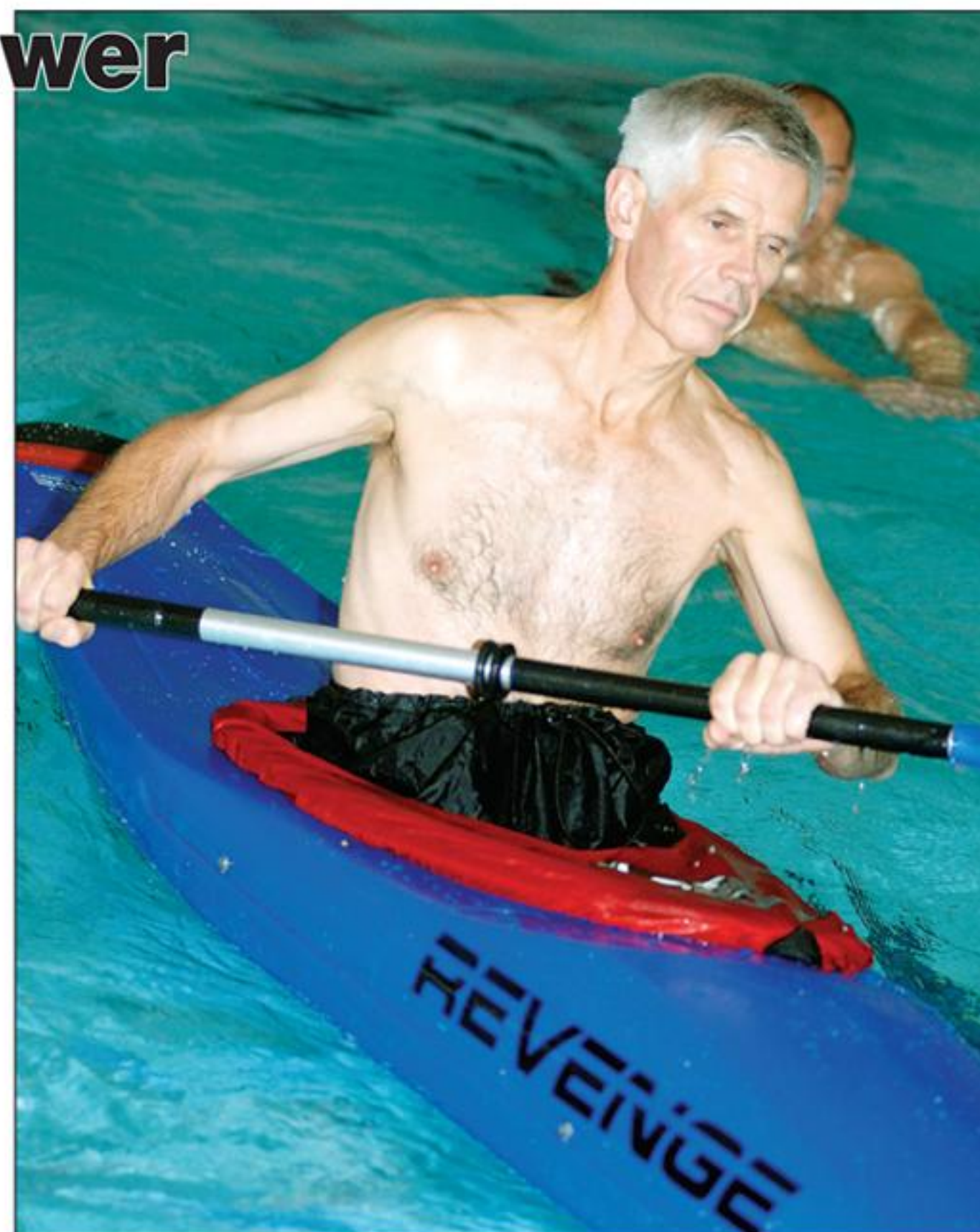
The admiral, who's pushing adventurous training in his position as the RN's personnel chief to give sailors better leadership skills and more 'grit', spent a day with the AT team at the home of RN physical fitness.

Accompanied by his staff – Lt Col Mike Tanner, Flag Lt Darren Parker, Command WO Andy Rainey, CPO Alan Marsh and LLogs Lew Lewis – Admiral Massey was 'gently' introduced to the art of kayaking in the Temeraire pool.

Then instructors CPO(PT) Wayne Hodgkinson, Lt Cdr Joe Wood and Lt Matt Twisleton upped the ante: a 'sea paddle' around Langstone Harbour.

Mass capsizes at the end demonstrated the effectiveness of the kit and were "great fun".

Although instructors are heavily in demand, AT courses are free and there are spaces. Details from [www.ahrc.co.uk](http://www.ahrc.co.uk) or from Lt Cdr Wood on 9380 22590.





# Up and Adam

THE North Gloucester Road Racing Club visited the 2.4 mile Thruxton Circuit in Hampshire for the final round (No 13) of its championship.

LAET Jamie Adam (RNAS Yeovilton) represented the Royal Navy Automobile Club in the Phoenix Open and the George White 600.

Jamie qualified in 18th place for the open final (consisting of bikes ranging from 250cc through to 1,000cc) in a time of 1m 27s on his Suzuki GSXR 600.

As the lights went green Jamie got off to a reasonable start but for some reason the bike suffered a technical problem and the leading hand started to slide back down through the order before being forced to retire on lap five of eight.

In the George White 600 he managed to qualify fourth on the grid – a personal best in a time of 7m 9s over the five-lap session.

Starting from 12th, the air engineer began in cracking fashion to move up to fourth place by the complex, with all the technical problems sorted from his previous race.

He was on the pace for this five-lap race and maintained contact with the front two until lap three then he started to slip back as his tyres started to wear and was passed by the fourth and fifth-placed bikes.

Then the motorcycle in fourth position crashed right in front of the sailor, before the bike in third ran wide. Jamie seized his opportunity to take third place for his best result of the season.

The day was finished off with the standard Jamie-organised hog roast for all the guys who helped – which went down well on a very wet and windy evening in the paddock.

Picture: PO Dutchy Holland (HMS York)



## End of the (Watergate) affair

Continued from back page

Ed even managed to complete a weekend without falling out of the boat, but brother Paul generally gets the blame for that.

Lastly Boat 37 (Richie Lake/Graham Mann) finally managed to get on the podium for the first time this season and shed their team title of 'Medal Virgins'.

The final event was celebrated with a black tie awards dinner and dance at the Watergate Bay Hotel where the commando team presented the Commando Trophy for the first time (to the team which consistently showed the four Commando qualities – courage, determination, unselfishness and cheerfulness).

This was awarded to the Safety/Rescue team who have for the last decade constantly pulled crews out of the water and saved numerous people from serious injury or worse.

The Commando team have done well throughout the season, they represented the RNRM outstandingly well with their competitiveness and sportsmanlike conduct.

All boats have had podium finishes throughout the season (Boat 37 eventually). Final results out of a field of 35 boats were:

Team Championship: 2nd  
Boat 37 'State Of Mind'  
5th overall (4th King of the Surf)  
Boat 14 'Go Commando III': 11th overall (8th King of the Surf)  
Boat 42 'Go Commando': 17th overall (2nd rookie, 17th King of the Surf)  
Boat 41 'Commando Spirit': 19th overall (4th rookie, 18th King of the Surf)  
Boat 36 'RMR Bristol': 20th overall (7th rookie, joint 18th King of the Surf).

Details from Capt Richie Lake on 93785 4200 or [zapcatgocommando@aol.com](mailto:zapcatgocommando@aol.com)

## The tour of the Roses

LANCASHIRE is, as everyone knows, the heartland of great sport (so writes *Lancastrian Sports Editor* – Ed).

So it is only right that the ship which bears the name of the county town maintains that sporting tradition half-way around the world.

The frigate, currently on a six-month Gulf deployment, is being kept fighting fit by club swinger LPT Daz Hoare.

He roused 48 shipmates out of bed for a 7am Rock race in Gibraltar (all 48 made it to the top, with winner AB Nelson-Smith posting a fantastic time of 25m 21s, followed 15 seconds later by CO Cdr Rory Bryan).

The football side opened their season against a Gib Combined Services team who hadn't been beaten in three or four years.

They have now. Despite the heat, Lancaster played brilliantly and came away with a 4-3 win.

Moving on to Bahrain the ship's rugby team got its first run out in over a year with some new players coming in.

Bahrain Rugby Club were a very strong unit for the sailors to come up against; the locals triumphed 26-0.

The football team had another run out with a few new players since the game in Gibraltar.

Lancaster were coasting at 3-0 until Bahrain FC upped their game in the second half to claw their way back to 3-2 down with ten minutes to go.

The referee awarded a very dubious penalty which Bahrain tucked away to draw the match 3-3.

There's a chance for the rugby team to avenge their mauling and the footballers to grab victory, plus a cricket match, when the frigate returns to Bahrain after its current patrol of the Iraqi oil platforms.

# Ladies in eleven heaven

RN FEMALE golfers swept all before them in the recent Inter-Service championships played over the delightful heathland courses at the Berkshire Golf Club near Ascot.

The win represented the ladies' first success in 11 years – achieved by a team who, on paper, were not as proficient as their opponents, writes Cdr Garry Skins.

Unfortunately the men were not able to emulate this success finishing in third place for the second year running.

After a full day's practice for all players, things got under way in earnest the following day with the RN taking on the RAF.

While the Navy had two of the lowest handicap golfers in POPT Wendy Briggs (HMS Neptune) off four and OM Claire Jones (Ark Royal) off five, the remainder of the RN 'batting order' appeared to be up against superior opposition.

Team captain Lt Cdr Debra Vout (Fleet) felt that her players did well in the morning foursomes to share the four points available. Navy wins came from the pairings of CPO Julie Kavanagh (MWS Collingwood)/PO Nikki Wade (NBC Portsmouth) and Jones partnered by Lt Lauren Hulston (824 NAS).



● The victorious RN women with their Inter-Services trophy

It was the afternoon singles where the Senior Service took complete control of proceedings.

WO Sue King (AFCC Manchester) and Kavanagh led the way, winning the first two matches, the latter winning the first nine holes played.

With Jones halving her match in the penultimate game and wins from four other matches, the final score of 8½-3½ to the Navy was indeed convincing. Other RN singles points came from AB Kerry Parnell (Westminster) CPO Lee Tubbs (RAF Wittering), Hulston and Briggs.

Meanwhile on the red course,

things were not quite going the same way for the RN men.

Of the five morning foursomes matches, the Navy won two, but lost three. Team captain Cdr Neil Hinch (SCC SW) considered this not insurmountable and was convinced he had the players to come good in the singles.

Navy foursomes successes came from LNN Scott Gilbert (MDHU Portsmouth)/Lt Guy Norris (771 NAS) and Cdr Ian Yuill (AFPAA Gosport)/LPT Mike Setterfield (CHF Yeovilton). The men played well in the afternoon but with one or two breaks not going their way, only 3½ points were gained

from the ten available. Wins came from CPO Lee McCathie (Blyth), Norris and Setterfield, while Gilbert halved. Final result RN 5½-RAF 9½.

Things did not get off to a good start the following day against the Army. Only Gilbert and Norris managing to secure a point in the foursomes: 4-1 down at lunch presented a mountain to climb and so it proved.

By the time Yuill halved his match in the penultimate game and Setterfield followed with the only singles victory, the cause had been well and truly lost: RN 2½ Army 12½ – the heaviest defeat to the soldiers in recent years.

The final day saw the Army men get the better of the RAF to claim the title, while the Navy ladies took on the Army, the holders.

The foursomes saw them out with guns blazing, dropping just one of the four points. King and Tubbs despatched their opponents way out in the country and while the games involving Jones and Hulston and Briggs with Parnell were closer affairs, a two point advantage at lunch was a great platform to take into the afternoon.

After the slight disappointment of a final green loss in the first game, everything went completely to plan and only one and a half further points went awry all afternoon.

# Lawn of a new era in Devonport

TUESDAY September 23 witnessed a little piece of history at HMS Drake: the first game of rugby union on the hallowed turf of the 'wardroom lawn'.

And it was a defeat – but only just. The Peninsula Medical College opened up a 22-point lead over Plymouth Command before the military men woke up and fought.

Plymouth clocked up 24 points without response to take a two-point lead... until the students bagged a try in the fading light with the last play of the match to snatch victory 27-24.

The lawn is home to cricket during the summer and has been used in the past for hockey, but never for RU, but senior officers at Drake are determined to see the green space used all year round – and to see the 102-year-old pavilion next to it revamped so sportsmen and women have some on-site changing facilities.

The pavilion is a listed building, so the base is in discussion with English Heritage on the best way to refurbish the structure.

Meanwhile in Cheshire... HMS Manchester's clubz, LPT Louise Clarke, took several shipmates to Sale Sharks RFC while their destroyer was in nearby Liverpool.

The Sharks are one of the warship's affiliates (moneybags Premiership side Man City FC are another).

A dozen Mancunians were invited to watch the Sharks take on Saracens at Edgeley Park (actually home of Stockport County FC), pose with mascot Sharkie (who looks more like a dolphin than a shark...), enjoy Sale's hospitality in the, er, hospitality suite, exchange plaques, receive shirts – which will be worn in Argentina, Chile and Peru during the ship's impending South Atlantic deployment – and, most humbling of all, receive a standing ovation from the 8,000 spectators.

"We were treated like royalty the whole evening," said Louise. "It was a surreal but fantastic evening and we felt extremely proud."

For the record, the Sharks won 18-15.



● Some free-flowing rugby during the historic encounter between Plymouth and medical students on the 'wardroom lawn' at Drake  
Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Sterratt, FRPU West





● Pleased as punch... CPO Smith shows his delight  
Picture: Richard Owens

## James is a hit in the Balearics

CYCLIST CPO James Smith bagged an impressive sixth place in a gruelling island road race.

The senior rate, based at HMS Raleigh, was a member of a four-man team competing in the Balearic Islands International Masters Cycling event in Majorca.

The race, which is now in its 11th year, is run on a stage basis similar to the Tour de France.

CPO Smith raced in the Master 30 category, which required him to complete nearly 300km in four days (also taking in some of the highest peaks on the island).

Competing against other national amateurs, including teams from Germany and Denmark, he managed third place in one of the intermediate sprints to wear the sprinter's green jersey.

The senior rating was the only representative of the RN taking part in the race, riding with a semi-professional trade team which included three other experienced UK cyclists.

"The race around Majorca went well although one stage had to be cut short because of torrential rain," said the 36-year-old cyclist.

"Overall I was really pleased with my performance and so was my team leader and I've now been asked to ride the tour of Ireland and the tour of Majorca next year."

# World class

THIS year's World Duathlon Championships were held in Rimini, Italy, with two RN athletes competing for the Great Britain age group team.

The first was the experienced Lt Nathan Gosling (25-29 group), fresh off deployment and already with the European title under his belt this year.

In addition this year there was a new recruit Surg Lt Gordon Irvine (age group 30-34) who qualified earlier in the year as a civilian and now flies the RN colours.

The course set has been tried and tested in previous international competition and was intended to involve a winding 10km run through the harbour, a 40km cycle ride, comprising six laps down the main beach front and finishing with a further 5km run around the harbour.

Closer examination of the course however revealed some discrepancies with distances – including possibly a substantially longer run than advertised.

Both athletes had prepared meticulously for this event and their form going into the race was apparent.

In the lead up to the event the weather was proving more adverse than expected with temperatures dropping to the low 'teens', intermittent showers and onshore gusts causing concern regards the ability to handle the deep section wheels used in such an event.

Fortunately come race day all turned out well to the relief of both competitors and spectators alike with clear skies and a reasonable temperature.

Both athletes started well during what proved to be a physical jostle for positioning in a field of over 250 international competitors.

Lt Gosling immediately settled in high up the

field with Surg Lt Irvine not far behind.

The pace for the first few kilometres proved to be fast and the surgeon used this time to reduce the distance to Lt Gosling, hitting the half-way mark neck-and-neck and in good overall position.

From here the two worked well together gaining valuable positions and overall time. Gosling dropped back only towards the later stages to leave Irvine to enter transition with a reasonable lead over his team mate.

On to the bike both RN competitors were making good progress and appeared to be fairing well towards the top end of the field.

A great deal of work has been done by both athletes throughout the season on bike strength and this proved invaluable.

Gosling once again showed his dominance in this discipline over his team mate and was able to substantially increase his lead again within just two of the six laps. Surg Lt Irvine held on well though and entered transition only a few seconds down.

The final run of 5km always proves to be a mental and physical challenge and after a gruelling ride with no let up, the two Royal Navy athletes entered the run in solid positions overall. Despite pending cramps in both athletes they grasped their positions firmly with neither being able to pull any distance back on the other. They indeed recorded identical times for this run.

Both athletes produced very solid performances with Lt Nathan Gosling recording a time of 2h 4m 46s to claim seventh place in his age group and Surg Lt Gordon Irvine only 34 seconds behind in 2h 5m 20s claiming 18th position in his grouping.

● Lt Nathan Gosling pounds the Rimini roads just feet ahead of his RN comrade Surg Lt Gordon Irvine



## Coach tour of Montserrat



● 'Can I have my ball back please, mister?'... Iron Duke's footballing coaches share their love of the sport with children on Montserrat  
Picture: LA(Phot) Jay Allen, FRPU East

HMS Iron Duke spread the word of the beautiful game when her footballers offered coaching to youngsters in Montserrat.

LPT 'Taff' Rees took a team of four players – CPO(AWW) 'Muddy' Waters, CPO(ET) 'Billy' Fish, PO(CIS) 'Paul' Adkins and LS(AWW) 'Spud' Murphy – to Brades Primary School, where 51 children were eager for some coaching.

Cricket, not football, is the number one sport in Montserrat, but in keeping with the RNFA's aim of carrying the footballing message wherever the Senior Service goes, clubz 'cooked up' a menu of passing, dribbling, heading, shooting, movement and teamwork.

"The children were very receptive to what I had taught them and enjoyed it immensely," said Spud.

"Not only did the kids enjoy it but I also enjoyed the whole day, it was a fantastic chance to give something back to the kids and also made the experience worthwhile."

Billy added: "Seeing the look of anticipation and excitement on the children's faces as we arrived at their school will be a lasting memory for me."

"They seemed genuinely excited at

the thought of playing football with a real 'England player'.

"It was an incredibly satisfying (as well as exhausting) day and I am sure we will all have lasting memories of the experience. It was also lovely to see the smiles on their faces and the innocent enthusiasm they displayed which approached with each drill."

With Brades converted to football, the sailors clambered into a minibus and headed to the sports ground of a secondary school... whose pupils were expecting the sailors to play cricket.

Undeterred, LPT Rees stuck to his plan and soon had the children playing admirably – so admirably, indeed, that when they took on the Iron Duke in a football match, they beat the sailors by a single goal margin.

"There were two challenging and physically-demanding sessions," said Taff.

"There were so many great moments to choose from, but on a personal level, to see the children embrace our ideas and instruction, as well as witnessing the smiles and happy laughter will be a memory that all the coaches will treasure forever."

## Paddle power

SOMEWHAT smaller than his last command... Second Sea Lord (and former Ark Royal CO) Vice Admiral Alan Massey tries kayaking drills in the pool at HMS Temeraire (pictured, right, by LA(Phot) Luron Wright).

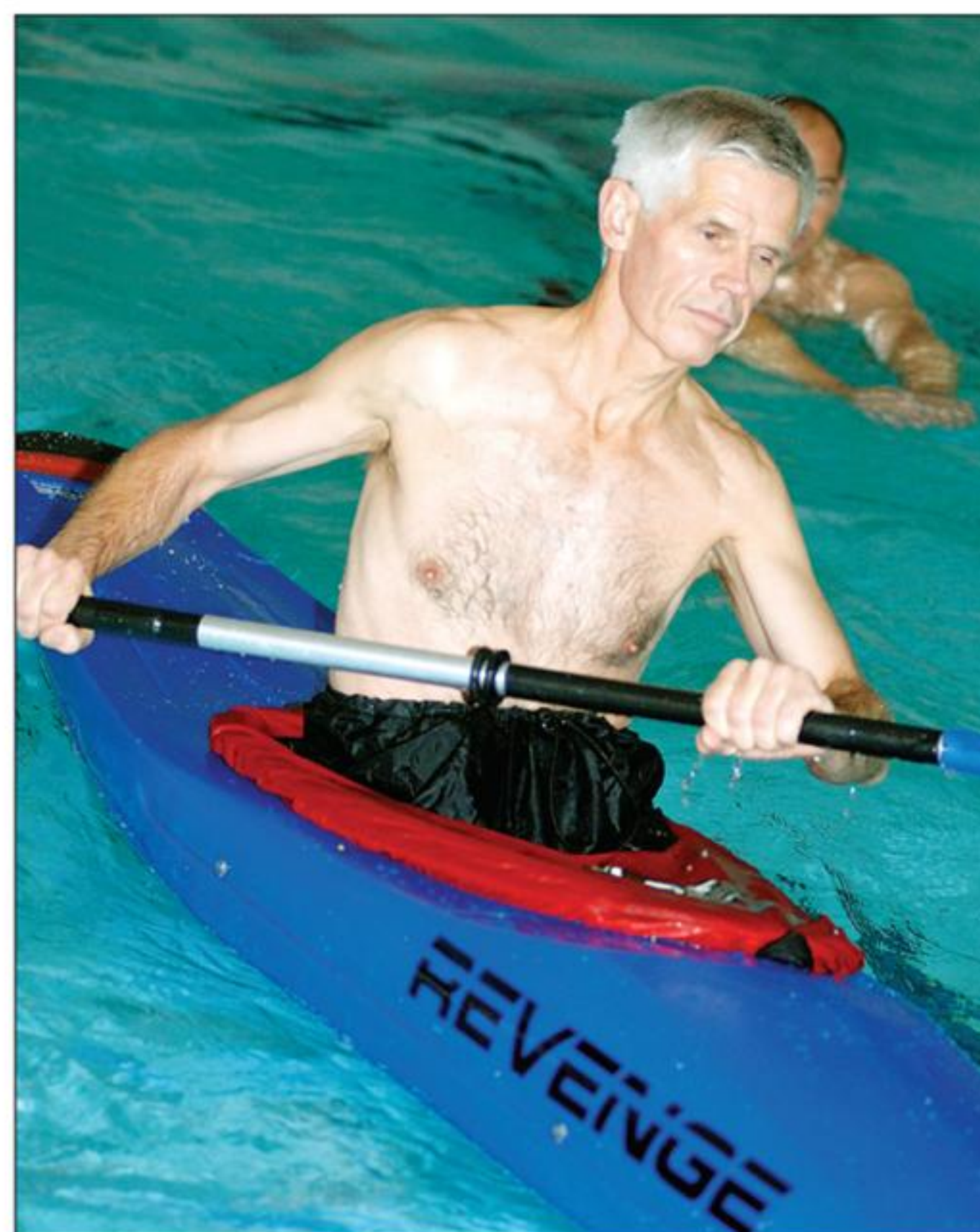
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THREE 67ft yachts will fight it out for Service honour in a year-long race around the world.

Exercise Transglobe is the largest offshore sailing adventurous training event in a decade.

Eleven of the 13 stages are devoted to AT – but there will be two legs where the Service sailors will be up against the cream of international ocean racing.

The RN, Army and RAF Sailing Associations will be picking the crews for those two legs (the legendary Sydney-Hobart race and Antigua Race Week).

But for the rest of the race, which runs from July 2009-July 2010, any RN/RM personnel are free to apply, irrespective of their experience.

The DIN with instructions on applying can be found at [www.jsastc.org](http://www.jsastc.org). More information on the race is available from [www.exercisetransglobe.com](http://www.exercisetransglobe.com) or from Sqn Ldr Neil Cottrell 9380 65610



# 'Greater than Trafalgar'

## Der Tag, November 1918

### A REGULAR VOYAGE

#### ANOTHER HUN OUTRAGE

#### STILL BRUTES

IT WAS a little before 8am on an overcast early autumn morning when the mail train pulled into the shed at Carlisle Pier.

Twenty-one postal workers leapt off and began unloading the 250 sacks of mail bound for the mother country, aided by a colleague waiting on the platform.

They had barely an hour to transfer all the sacks from the train to the waiting steamer, the Royal Mail Ship Leinster, a 20-year veteran of the run from Kingstown – today Dún Laoghaire – to Holyhead.

Black, grey and white irregular shapes – 'dazzle paint' – hid her original black and white livery and a 3in gun was mounted on her stern, manned by men of the Royal Navy.

By mid-day, the two-funnelled steamer would be at her berth in Anglesey, her mail sorted ready to be carried to the four corners of mainland Britain, and the Leinster could prepare for the return journey to Ireland.

The newspapers this Thursday morning, October 10, talked of peace and victory.

The British Army in France had smashed its way through the Hindenburg Line, the formidable chain of fortifications which were the mainstay of the German defences on the Western Front.

Vienna had asked for an armistice. So too Berlin. It had received a cautious response from the American President, Woodrow Wilson.

The war went on. On land. In the air. And at sea.

Just that very morning, a U-boat had been spotted off the Kish Bank, the shallows half a dozen miles east of Kingstown.

Leinster's master, 61-year-old William Birch, conferred with naval intelligence as his crew readied the steamer for departure. And depart she would, war or no war.

Catherine Gould filed up one of two gangways with her six children – May, Essie, Alice, Angela, Olive and Michael. The Goulds from Limerick were "humble, decent people", hard-working. The father of the household, a former soldier, worked in a munitions factory in England. Today, or perhaps tomorrow, the Goulds would be reunited.

Canadian Robert Frizzell did not make it up the gangway. The Leinster was full. In the throng at the Kingstown quayside he had become separated from his bride of just one day, Virginia. The couple vowed to meet on the other side.

The Goulds and the Frizzells were the exception, not the rule on the Leinster. Of the 771 souls aboard, almost 500 were military personnel – Britons, Irish, Australians, New Zealanders, Canadians, Americans.

By 8.50am, all souls and all sacks of mail were aboard. The gangways were withdrawn and the Leinster slipped her ropes, turned 180° in the harbour before heading out into open water.

There she passed her sister, the Ulster, returning from Holyhead after a choppy crossing, then the Kish lightship, zig-zagging constantly.

In the galley, the stewards had just finished serving breakfast. Some passengers retired to the smoking room, some headed out on deck.

In the post room, John Joseph Higgins was sorting the registered mail. After four years of war, Higgins and his 21 post office colleagues had become inured to the sounds of alarms, to the danger of the U-boat. Today they were troubled more by



● 'Like a wild dream'... British sailors, most in anti-flash, watch as the Hochseeflotte sails into captivity on Der Tag

the rough seas than by the foe.

Chief Special Mechanic James Mason, a US sailor among the military personnel heading for the mainland, was enjoying the fresh air on the Leinster's starboard side when a cry shattered the otherwise routine crossing: Torpedo!

Oberleutnant Robert Ramm had just watched the Ulster cross his bow. Her zig-zagging had thwarted his efforts to attack. But peering through the periscope of his boat, UB123, he sighted another steamer coming into view. He prepared to attack.

Ramm's brief naval career – just eight years – had begun in the surface fleet in the obsolete battleship SMS Hessen before transferring to the U-boatwaffe with his 'class of 1910' comrade Karl Dönitz.

Ramm was a keen sportsman, a good learner, and had the ability to fire up the men under him. By the spring of 1918, these qualities and his experience in a clutch of U-boats, earned him command of the new 180ft coastal submarine, UB123.

UB123's first patrol that summer was unsuccessful but not uneventful. She had survived a pounding from more than two dozen depth charges near Tory Island off Donegal.

After six weeks' leave, Ramm and his 35 shipmates returned to their boat. They had orders to wreak havoc against enemy shipping off the west coast of Ireland and in the Irish Sea.

Ramm's first torpedo whistled past the Leinster's bow. His second, however, plunged into the steamer's port side.

The torpedo exploded in the middle of the post office. The stairway – the sole means of escape – disintegrated. The floor collapsed. Several postal workers were killed instantly by the blast. Others were crushed as the ship caved in around them. And others still were drowned as the Irish Sea rushed in. John Joseph Higgins tried to find a way out in the darkness, but soon began to "think of the next world".

On the bridge Captain Birch ordered the ship turned around: he would try to make for Kingstown – but he held out little hope. Leinster, he told an army officer, would sink in less than ten minutes. She would not last that long.

Robert Ramm had no intention of allowing his quarry to reach the safety of harbour. He fired a third

torpedo at the Leinster.

John Joseph Higgins had somehow managed to clamber out of his compartment and made his way on to the main deck where he found lifeboats being lowered into the water. He grabbed hold of a rope, slithered down it and landed in a boat as it was pushed away from the side of the stricken steamer. As the lifeboat slowly moved away, Ramm's third torpedo smashed into the Leinster. "The whole centre portion," Higgins recalled was "blown sky-high". The two funnels were blown into the air and a swirl of pungent black smoke surrounded the steamer. Pieces of metal and wood turned into lethal shards, striking passengers as they waited impatiently to take to the boats.

Robert Ramm's first hit had crippled the steamship, perhaps fatally. His second blow practically broke her in two. What semblance of order there had been before evaporated. There was a mad rush for the boats and life rafts as the Leinster began to heel to port and sink rapidly by the bow.

James Mason lowered himself using a rope then struck out for a life raft. He turned briefly to watch the death throes of the steamer. Only a handful of boats had been launched in time – and most of those capsized – while the dozen liferafts which floated clear of the wreck rose and sank viciously with the heavy sea.

For at least two hours, the American clung to one raft with a handful of survivors. It capsized at least twice before the crew of a motor launch hauled perhaps 14 people from the sea before departing the scene. The sailors could offer the survivors no medical assistance save for a drop of whiskey.

The first survivors were landed back in Kingstown in the early afternoon. Virginia Frizzell was not among them. Her husband of one day became a widower.

Of the Gould family, only the mother's body was recovered; the sea devoured her children. Five days after the tragedy, her sole surviving daughter, Essie, and her husband – now widower – waited at Limerick railway station for her coffin. The whole town mourned.

In all, 501 souls went down with the Leinster. Berlin desired peace, but waged war, fumed Whitehall – and waged war with all the callousness, all the barbarism, all the frightfulness which had come to typify the Hun. Not since the sinking of the Lusitania three and a half years before was public sentiment so enraged. "Brutes they were when they began the war," the normally mild Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour fumed, "brutes they remain."

### GREAT BLOCKADE

#### ERSATZ EVERYTHING

#### GERMANY STARVES

Princess Evelyn Blücher agreed. "What a deplorable deed – just at the eleventh hour when Germany is trying to prove to the world that she desires peace." Born and educated in Britain, Evelyn had married the grandly-titled Gebhard Leberecht Blücher von Wahlstatt – descendant of the great field marshal who fought by Wellington's side at Waterloo. The Blüchers divided their time between the family estate at Krieblowitz, near the Silesian capital of Breslau, and Berlin. Daily, or weekly, Evelyn chronicled life in the Kaiser's Empire throughout the war. And daily – and weekly – her pronouncements became ever darker.

They became darker because the German people were dying. They were dying chiefly because they were starved of the basic stuff of life thanks largely to the Allied navies.

'Blockade' was the word of the day. Sometimes 'the great blockade', sometimes 'the British blockade', usually 'the starvation blockade', for in the final analysis that was its goal – and that is what it achieved.

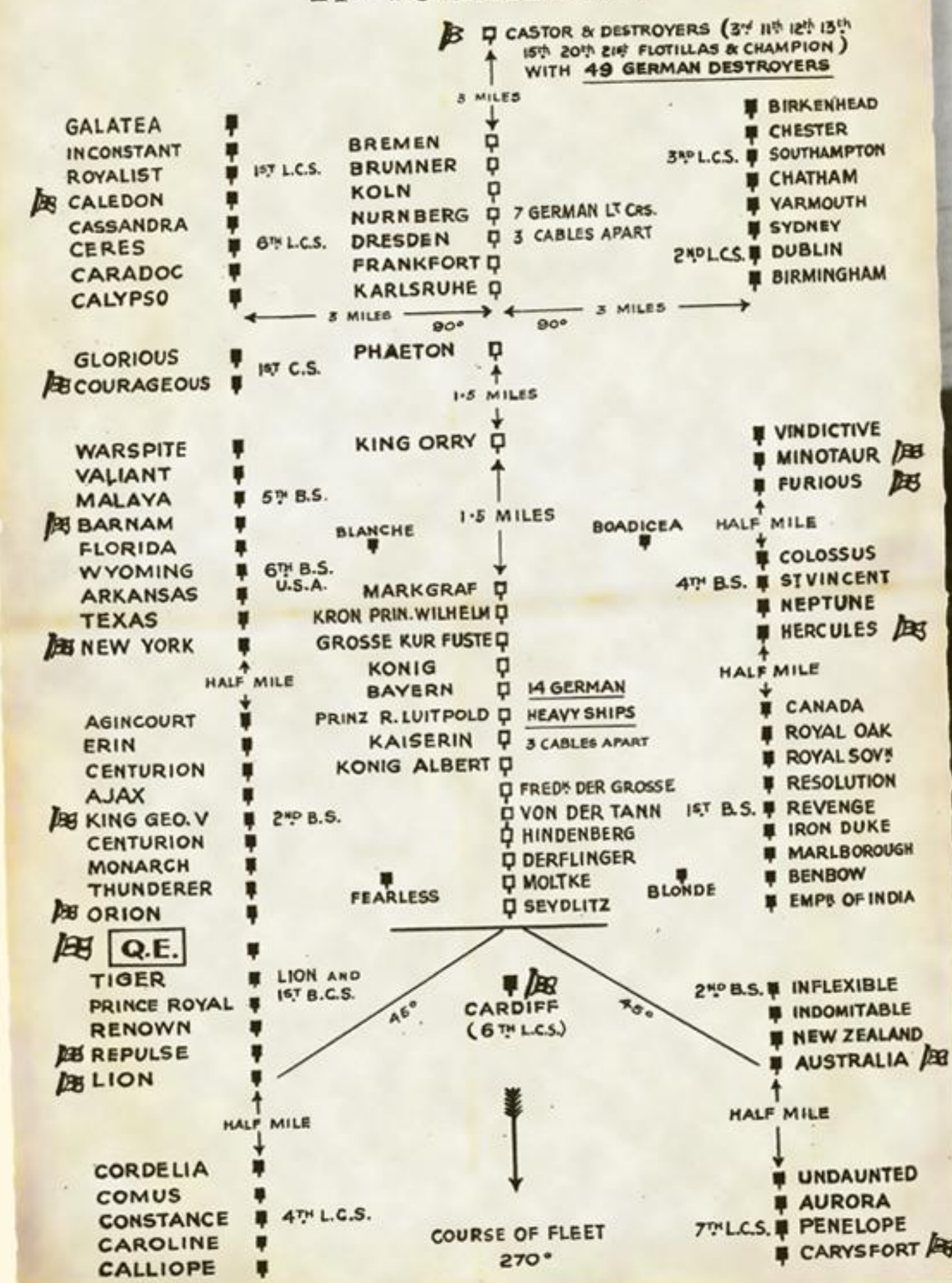
Germany was blighted by her geographic position. Britain and France guarded the Strait of Dover, while the might of the Grand Fleet could easily command the Reich's only other outlet to the oceans, the 155 miles of water between Britain and Scandinavia.

Which is exactly what it did. On

Continued on page ii



## SURRENDER OF GERMAN FLEET 21st NOVEMBER 1918



Continued from page i  
the first day of war, the Royal Navy slipped the noose around the neck of the Central Powers. It spent the next four and a half years tightening it.

It was a slow, laborious process. It promised no instant results – frustrating for sailor and politician alike, “but,” wrote the blockade’s staunchest advocate, secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence Maurice Hankey, “when the psychological moment arrives and cumulative effects reach their maximum and are perhaps combined with crushing defeats of the enemy, the results may be not merely material, but decisive.”

By the autumn of 1918, that psychological moment was imminent.

The blockade – coupled with the exertions of four years of war – gnawed at every facet of German life. Food. Fuel. Metal. Soap. Clothes. Wood and cardboard replaced leather soles in shoes and boots. Women could only buy three dresses, two for weekdays, one for Sunday best. Restaurants replaced cloth napkins with paper ones. Hotels took to changing bed sheets only once a week.

After food, the shortage of coal – Berliners now referred to it as ‘black gold’ – was the gravest worry. In winter, the authorities would issue only as much as was needed to heat a room to 62°F.

The furnaces of war kept going, of course. Into them were tossed all manner of metals: lead piping from the streets, church bells and copper organ pipes. The war was devouring the very fabric of German society.

Starvation was what the starvation blockade did best – despite the efforts of the German government to curb its impact.

From the outset, food was rationed. But rationing alone was not enough. Alternative foodstuffs had to be found.

*Ersatz* – substitute or, more critically, fake – was the word on every German’s

lips. *Ersatz* coffee. *Ersatz* sausages – some 800 varieties in all. *Ersatz* meat. There wasn’t *Ersatz* bread. But there was *Kartoffelbrot*, potato bread (although the government insisted on naming it *Kriegsbrot*, war bread), with potatoes providing the flour. The potato proved to be a remarkably good substitute... until the crop failed in 1916. Germans branded the subsequent winter *Kohlrußenwinter* – the turnip winter – as turnips became the *Ersatz* potato.

By the autumn of 1918 there was little food left, real or *Ersatz*. The average German was expected to survive on fewer than 2oz of meat, one pint of milk, 5lbs of potatoes, under an ounce of butter, and 1/25th of an ounce – just one gramme – of sugar each week. The calorie intake fell to less than half its pre-war level. “We are all gaunt and bony now, and have dark shadows around our eyes,” Evelyn Blücher wrote. “Our thoughts are chiefly taken up with wondering what our next meal will be, and dreaming of the good things that once existed.”

As weight fell, so death’s harvest grew. The blockade claimed the lives of as many German civilians as the trenches claimed the lives of British soldiers. Women queueing in grocery stores, journalist Ernst Gläser observed, “talked more about their children’s hunger than about their husbands’ deaths”.

were “lying about on the floors of their cottages in woeful heaps, shivering with fever”. There was no doctor to care for them. The surgeon in the nearest town was overworked and the flu had already claimed the life of his colleague. Besides, there was no medicine to give the afflicted. By the time the few remaining church bells rang in 1919, 400,000 Germans had been killed by the influenza virus.

To the British-born princess, there was no doubt that the German Empire was dying. “It is a pitiful sight to watch the death throes of a great nation,” she confided to her diary. “I feel intensely for Germany and her brave long-suffering people, who have made such terrific sacrifices and gone through so much woe, only to see their idols shattered and to realise that their sufferings have all been caused by the blundering mistakes and overweening ambition of a class of ‘supermen’.”

Chief among supermen – and chief among blunderers – was Erich Ludendorff, *de facto* military leader of Germany. He had advocated unrestricted submarine warfare to bring Britain to her knees, which it did not... but it did bring America with all her military, industrial and economic might into the war. He had advocated striking a knockout blow in the West before the Americans arrived *en masse* in France... but the blow had merely wounded, not killed. He had advocated peace through victory... but now, reluctantly, he advocated peace without victory.

Throughout the summer, the German Army in France had reeled from a series of blows, first on the Marne, then on the Somme. He ignored the writing on the wall at the Marne. Even after 27,000 men were lost on the first day of the Commonwealth’s Somme offensive, August 8 – “the black day of the German Army” – the gruff, imposing general refused to concede defeat.

Ignorance and irrationality notwithstanding, the blows against Germany persisted. The new American armies struck near Verdun, then in the Argonne. The British smashed their way through the supposedly impregnable Hindenburg Line. Bulgaria, Berlin’s Balkan ally, sued for peace.

Ludendorff finally cracked. On September 28, he collapsed during a conference, fell to the ground and may – or may not – have started foaming at the mouth. The next day he startled a gathering of Germany’s political and military leaders by demanding an immediate armistice.

“The German Army is at an end,” the general told his staff. “The war can no longer be won.” Tears

Hunger often exacerbated other illnesses. Heart problems. Tuberculosis. Eye infections. Infant mortality rates alone doubled between 1913 and 1918. Worst of all was the dreaded *Grippe* – influenza – “making havoc among the population” in the autumn of 1918. In one week, it claimed the lives of 70 staff in the Wertheim department store – Berlin’s Harrods. In Hamburg, upwards of 400 people were dying every day.

streamed down the officers’ faces, some mumbled, some groaned. “For the time being I see no hope in the future,” wrote a dejected *Oberst* (Colonel) Albrecht von Thaer. “I envy all the good friends who were able to fall for Fatherland and honour.”

## GROWING UNREST A FINAL FIGHT?

Honour was a word much used in the *Admiralstab*, the German Admiralty. From nothing, in two decades they had fashioned the second most powerful fleet on the seven seas. They had banished the spell of Trafalgar at the *Skagerrakschlacht* – Jutland to Britons. But there could never be another Skagerrak, Reinhard Scheer, the head of the *Admiralstab*, had conceded. His fleet could never bring Britain to her knees. The U-boat became Germany’s sharpest sword at sea.

Rarely post-Jutland did the *Schlachtschiffe* and *Schlachtkreuzer* – battleships and battle-cruisers – leave port, and when they did their sorties were invariably abortive.

While the U-boats *ran an den Feind* (charged at the enemy), three battleships sat at anchor in the roadsteads of north-west Germany. And languishing in port killed the High Seas Fleet as surely as the guns of the Grand Fleet.

The sailors shared the privations of the home front – poor food (the crew of the Prinzregent Luitpold were served soup “swarming with worms”), poor pay, war weariness. To these hardships was added overbearing Prussian militarism. Relations between officers and men were non-existent. Relations between executive officers and engineer officers were non-existent. When officers cancelled a film show aboard the Luitpold in late July 1917 – and replaced with an afternoon of infantry drill – it sparked a sizeable uprising.

The German Navy put down the 1917 unrest with a mix of repression (the ringleaders were either shot or imprisoned) and concession (slightly improved food rations). Discontent continued to simmer away, however, as *Obermatrose* (able seaman) Richard Stumpf observed. “The mood of my comrades is grave, very grave indeed,” he noted in his diary aboard the battleship Helgoland.

“Many of our younger men have had their heads turned by Bolshevik ideas. I have very little faith in an early triumph of the angel of peace.”

The Bavarian found himself torn between duty and reality. “We have now reached a point from which we can no longer go on. But is there not also a saying which states that it is better to die than become a slave?”

The commanders of the *Hochseeflotte* thought so. The prospect of surrender filled the German Admiralty with the “fear of shame”, its Chief-of-Staff, Adolf von Trotha, wrote. How could the German Empire go under without its battlefleet fighting a final, decisive battle? It could not, argued von Trotha. “A new German future will be born out of an honourable battle by our Fleet. There is no future from a Fleet shackled by a shameful peace.”

Reinhard Scheer agreed. “It is a question of the Navy’s honour and existence to have fought to the very end in its final fight.”

And so his staff began drafting the final plan of the war, Operational

Plan No.19, an uninspiring name for a grandiose scheme to lure the Grand Fleet into the southern North Sea and a trap of U-boats, mines and battleships. The trap would be sprung on the penultimate day of October.

## DESIRE FOR ACTION ‘GREY, GREY, GREY’

David Beatty too had one eye on the future of his nation – and his Navy. The Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet was everything his predecessor, Jellicoe, was not. Beatty was a man of dash and deeds, his admiral’s cap was always slanted at a rakish angle, his photograph was “in every newsagent’s window”.

Yet just like his predecessor, he too could lose the war in an afternoon if he handled his impressive array of sea power injudiciously. He did not.

Though never inactive, the Grand Fleet never took the fight to the enemy. It didn’t need to.

Not that the British public understood the minutiae of exercising sea power. They had been weaned for a decade or more on naval theatre: mock battles on park lakes, great reviews on the Thames and at Spithead. They cheered each launch of a dreadnought, chastised politicians when enough battleships were not being built, snapped up nautical postcards. They were told the spirit of Nelson was alive and well. A second Trafalgar was imminent.

Except that a second Trafalgar was not imminent. Less than a fortnight into the war, Fred Jane, the pre-eminent naval commentator of the day, found the British people disappointed that there had been no decisive battle between the Grand and High Seas Fleets.

“Events of that sort make very fine reading and also fine pieces for picture palaces, but they are not modern warfare,” Jane admonished his readers. There would be no second Trafalgar, the journalist warned. The war would be long and dull, as the Royal Navy sought to strangle its foe.

Jane was right, but no-one was listening. On the trams and in the streets of Glasgow, Surgeon Probationer James Shaw eavesdropped on conversations. “What is the Navy doing?” people asked themselves.

There was no hiding what the Army was doing. It was smashing its way towards the German border, rolling up the Hindenburg Line, plunging the sword into the belly of the beast.

But the Grand Fleet seemed to just sit in its great harbours. Scapa Flow was certainly not a place to lift the spirits. It was, wrote Beatty, “the most damnable place on earth”. Lt Oswald Frewen described himself “war-weary, Scapa-weary, weary of seeing the same old damned agony of grey grey grey, grey sky, grey sea, grey ships.” Morale bucked markedly when the bulk of the Grand Fleet moved to Rosyth – and closer to the bright lights of Edinburgh and Glasgow.

The bright lights of Scotland’s two great metropolises were scant consolation for Britain’s sailors. They yearned to get at the Hun, to dispatch him once and for all, to show to him that the lessons of Jutland had been learned, that mastery of the seas was the Royal Navy’s – and the Royal Navy’s alone.

No-one yearned more than David Beatty for one last, decisive battle.

● Captives and captors... (Left) German Parkeston Quay, Harwich and (above) la

The Grand Fleet, he was convinced, had made “gigantic strides” under his leadership. The Navy, no the nation, needed a demonstration of Britain’s might at sea – if only to justify the vast sums lavished on the great dreadnoughts. “It is terrible to think that after all these weary months of waiting, we shall not have an opportunity of striking a blow,” he lamented. “Please God our time will soon come when we can put it to the test and reap our reward.”

## PLAN NUMBER 19 ‘DEATH OR GLORY’

### DOWN WITH THE KAISER!

David Beatty wanted to wage battle to demonstrate for all time the importance of sea power. Across the sea, Reinhard Scheer wanted to wage battle for the sake of honour – and perhaps a better deal at the peace table.

To that end, Operational Plan No.19 was more inspiring in content than name. Nearly two dozen *Schlachtschiffe* and *Schlachtkreuzer* would lie in wait in the southern North Sea, chaperoned by seven dozen cruisers and destroyers. Some of the latter would pummel Allied positions in Flanders, others would charge into the Thames estuary and unleash hell. The Grand Fleet would sally from its anchorages to intercept – and promptly be mauled as it passed through freshly-laid minefields and six lines of U-boats. The rest of the force would be mopped up by the big guns of Beatty’s German counterpart, Franz von Hipper.

As Hipper issued his orders, so rumours swarmed around the ports of north-west Germany: a suicide mission, a death ride, a ‘death or glory’ charge which offered rather more chances of death than glory. Hipper and Scheer may have been obsessed with honour and duty, the ordinary German sailor, the *Matrose*, feared for his life. There was, one stoker complained, “no use any more in risking one’s life with peace imminent”. The *Matrosen* mutinied.

It began on the cruiser SMS Strassburg in Wilhelmshaven. When she tried to put to sea, her stokers dampened the fires in the boilers, while their shipmates tried to open the stop cocks and scuttle the vessel.

The revolt spread. Around 100 men from the Von der Tann jumped ship and ran amok in Wilhelmshaven. Stokers in three battle-cruisers allowed the fires in the boilers to die.

The mutiny reached its height aboard the battleship Thüringen. Junior ranks locked up the officers and senior ratings, hoisted the red flag and refused to sail. The red flag fluttered too on her sister the Helgoland.

All discipline had collapsed. The authority of officers had evaporated. Having lived under the jackboot of iron discipline for four years, even Richard Stumpf felt compelled to rebel. Like many of his shipmates, he refused to salute his captain. Far from berating Stumpf, he asked him why “in his paternally mild voice”, Stumpf stuttered. “I could hardly answer for shame over my arrogant behaviour.”

The rot however had set in. Stumpf joined his comrades and set off to march through the streets of Wilhelmshaven to demonstrate for their rights. Some sailors grabbed musical instruments and struck up traditional marches while the men chanted: *Wir kämpfen nicht um Deutschlands Ehre, wir kämpfen nur für Millionäre* – we’re not fighting for Germany’s honour, we’re fighting for the millionaires.

The throng grew as the crowd moved through the dockyard. The barracks gate was bolted by an elderly *Major*. The mob tore the epaulettes off his shoulders, ripped the gate off its hinges and marched



● Admiral Sir David Beatty raises his cap to salute the men of the Grand Fleet on Der Tag





...n crews prepare to file off surrendered U-boats flying the White Ensign at the last ride of the Hochseeflotte... German Schlachtschiffe at sea on Der Tag

on. Someone raised a dirty red bedsheet on a pole, others waved red strips of cloth, others still whistled at Wilhelmshaven's women or yelled coarsely.

In a square in the heart of the port shipwrights and civilians mustered with the sailors to hear rabble-rousing speeches. Down with the mayor. Down with the Kaiser. Down with the Imperial family. Richard Stumpf now found himself clamouring for the downfall of the monarchy. "My heart, I no longer understand you!" he scribbled in his diary.

After several tense hours – rumours that the Army were being sent to put down the rebellion – the sailors trudged back to their ships. But the *Matrosen* would not take them to sea. Operational Plan No.19 was dead.

## U-BOATS HOME

### TRAFALGAR TRAGEDY

#### TERRIBLE SLAUGHTER

On the Istrian coast, *Kapitän zur See* Theodor Püllen watched the disintegration of a nation. The Austro-Hungarian Empire was imploding, its many disparate nationalities were revolting, determined to throw off the twin yokes of Vienna and Budapest. Poles, Serbs, Bosnians all rose up, intent at last upon self-determination. In Istria, Croatian troops revolted in Fiume. The uprising would spread, Theodor Püllen was convinced, sweep along the coast and engulf Pola too, the home of the Austro-Hungarian Fleet.

But Pola was more than just a home to the dreadnoughts of Emperor Karl. It was also home to the *U-Flotille Pola* – Pola U-boat Flotilla – and Theodor Püllen had no intention of allowing his two dozen *German* boats to be victims of *Austro-Hungarian* dissolution. He ordered his boats home to the Reich. In the dying days of October 1918, *Matrosen* either scuttled boats unfit for the arduous journey back to the Fatherland, or slipped out through the Adriatic.

Sooner or later, each raider of the deep would have to run the gauntlet: the Strait of Gibraltar. They found the gateway to the Atlantic filled with destroyers, patrol craft and torpedo boats while seaplanes buzzed overhead, scouring the waters for the telltale wake of a periscope.

The British dragnet was less than effective. Only one U-boat, U35, failed to make it through the narrow waters, victim of a heavily-armed gunboat.

A dozen of his comrades did reach the Atlantic. Among the last was *Oberleutnant zur See* Heinrich Kukat and UB50. Contemporaries regarded the 27-year-old Kukat as the finest leader in their year group, a *ganzer Kerl* – a he-man, a quiet commander who demonstrated his strength only in battle.

At dawn on Saturday November 9 Kukat found himself off the most hallowed spot in Royal Navy history, Cape Trafalgar. And through his periscope, he watched as a great warship and her two escorts lumbered slowly back towards Gibraltar. Kukat chose to attack. His first torpedo missed. Two more did not.

The 16,000-ton aged battleship HMS Britannia shuddered under the impact, then was shaken as cordite in her magazine exploded.

But the Britannia did not die – not yet, at any rate. She sluggishly heeled to port – so sluggishly, in fact, that her crew fired the leviathan's secondary guns when Kukat dared to raise his periscope again.

The defiance was in vain. Britannia was mortally wounded. After a three-hour death struggle she disappeared beneath the waves, taking 50 men with her.

Britannia was the last of five million tons of shipping sunk in the Mediterranean theatre. But she was

not the war's last victim of a U-boat.

That unfortunate distinction belongs to the unsung paddle steamer HMS Ascot, sweeping mines off the Northumbrian coast, torpedoed by *Oberleutnant zur See* Hellmuth von Doemming in UB67. Every one of Ascot's 63 crew perished in the bitterly cold waters of the North Sea.

Thus did end the first war of the U-boats.

German yards had produced 320 submarines – 128 ocean-going boats, 192 coastal vessels – which had made 3,274 *Feindfahrten* (sorties) and sunk 6,394 merchant ships – nearly 12 million tons in all, more than half of it British. They had also claimed the scalps of 100 warships: ten battleships, 18 cruisers, 21 destroyers and ten submarines. And they had condemned 30,000 sailors – 14,000 of them Britons – to death at sea.

And for all this carnage, for all this slaughter they had failed. They had not brought Britain to her knees. And they paid a terrible price for daring to challenge Britain's mastery of the ocean. Of the Kaiser's 320 boats, 229 were lost. One in every two U-boat men – more than 5,000 sailors in all – never came home.

Among them was Robert Ramm and every one of his 35 shipmates, their boat destroyed by a mine in the North Sea nine days after they had condemned the Leinster to a similarly watery grave.

## REVOLUTION

### 'I NO LONGER HAVE A NAVY'

The men of the *Hochseeflotte* had no intention of joining them. Mutiny in Wilhelmshaven was quickly followed by mutiny in the Baltic. To break up the revolt, the *Admiralstab* dispersed the mutinying ships among its ports. It served not to quell the unrest, but fan the fires of revolt. Cuxhaven went up in flames. So too Kiel – to the German Navy what Portsmouth is to Royal Navy.

By dusk on November 3, the uninspiringly named *Exerzierplatz* (exercise ground), a sprawling parade area on the edge of Kiel city centre, was filled with some 20,000 sailors, shipwrights and disaffected workers, singing the *Internationale*, brandishing torches and demanding the release of imprisoned sailors.

There were still some sailors loyal to the Kaiser. When the baying mob tried to storm the naval prison, the sound of rifle fire echoed through the streets of Kiel. Thirty people were killed or wounded... and mutiny turned to revolution.

The rebelling sailors armed themselves. They moved through the streets of Kiel stripping officers of their swords and epaulettes, beating, shooting anyone who stood in their way. By nightfall on November 4, Kiel was in the hands of the mob.

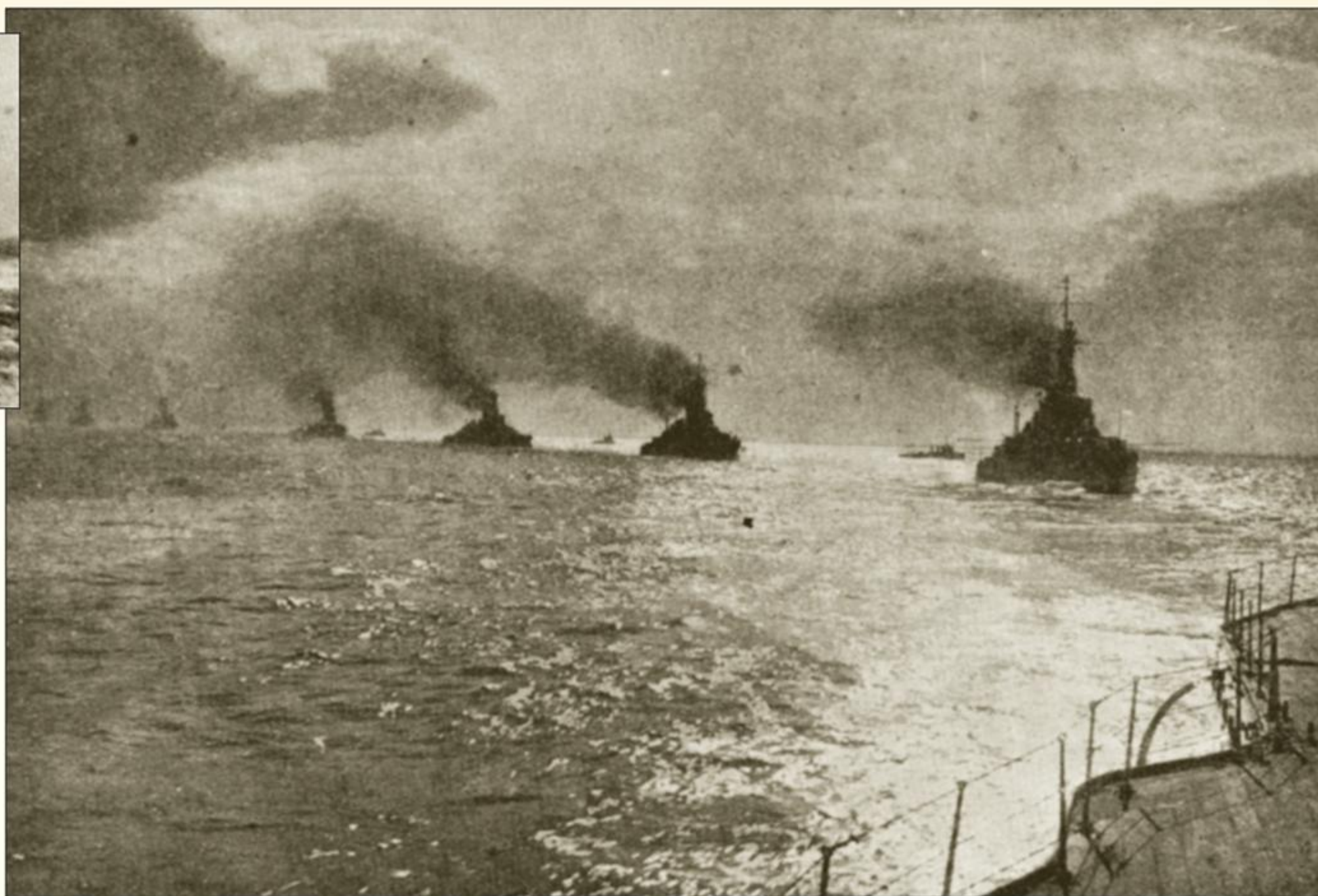
Revolution was infectious. The 'red sailors' fanned out across Germany by train, by truck. Frankfurt, Munich, Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Halle, Cologne. All turned 'red'.

And in Wilhelmshaven, the cradle of this growing revolution, the Imperial war flag was lowered and the red flag was raised, cheered on by a crowd perhaps 100,000 strong.

Long after the weak sun of an autumn Sunday had dipped beyond the western horizon, the sailors celebrated.

"Never before has Wilhelmshaven looked like this!" Richard Stumpf enthused. "Thousands upon thousands of flaring rockets rise in the air, all the sirens howl, the searchlights gleam by the dozen, the ships' bells clang madly and the guns of the fort roar out their salute."

They celebrated because the war was over – an armistice would be signed in two days' time – and because that very day Wilhelm II, King of Prussia, Emperor of Germany, had abdicated.



● Battleship HMS Orion leads a division of dreadnoughts to escort the German Fleet into captivity

His politicians no longer supported him. His people no longer supported him. His soldiers no longer supported him. But nothing struck at the heart of the last of the Hohenzollerns than the unrest sweeping the Navy, *his* Navy. As he contemplated exile in the Netherlands, he turned to Reinhard Scheer. "My dear admiral, the Navy has deserted me very nicely," he rasped. "I no longer have a Navy."

## THE GUNS SILENCED

### 'HYSTERIA OF DELIGHT'

As they did every week in Rosyth, the men of HMS Tiger were coaling the battle-cruiser, topping up with 400 tons. This Monday morning, November 11, the derricks whirled and clanged. The shovels clashed. The bunkers slowly filled. Suddenly the shrill notes of a bugle began to pierce the din, the sound of the Still. The men looked up and saw Tiger's buglers, all of them. The noise and clanging ceased and the strains of cease fire drifted through the hallowed passageways of the battle-cruiser. A reservist, for some reason dressed in his finest eveningwear, scrambled up the coal heap, raised his top hat, and bowed to the buglers.

It took time for the realisation of what the buglers had trumpeted to sink in. "The pent-up feelings of over four years of terrible war sent men into a hysteria of delight," observed Victor Hayward. The bugles sounded again. Clear lower deck. The men headed to the quarterdeck, swarmed around their captain, Alf Bentick, and shook his hand.

Bentick struggled to control his emotions. Tears welled in his eyes as he thanked them for their service. "If I could send you all on leave," he assured them, "I would do so, but we must await instructions from the Admiralty."

The men returned to their mess decks, received their tot, then resumed their daily business. For Victor Hayward that meant a training session with Tiger's running team, the Harriers: a run out to Lord Elgin's estate, a good 15 miles in all. By the time he arrived back at the dockyard, darkness was closing in on the Forth.

Darkness was the signal for the festivities to begin. The great estuary was suddenly lit by the dazzle of searchlight beams as the Fleet turned its lamps on. Ships' bands clambered into launches and began to move between the castles of steel, entertaining the men with wartime favourites. As David Beatty sat down to dine with his staff aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth, the ship's company mustered outside his cabin singing *For He's A Jolly Good Fellow*. Fireworks exploded high above Rosyth, first from the American warships, then from the Grand Fleet. "The whole harbour was now ablaze with wheeling searchlight beams," wrote Victor Hayward. "It was wonderful to watch after over four years of darkness."

As the festivities died down and sailors, many the worse for wear

thanks to alcohol, turned in for the night, Victor Hayward strolled around Tiger, smoking his pipe. The only sound now came from North Sea waves slapping against the leviathan's hull and the rush of the November breeze between the warships. "My mind wandered back over the last dreadful four years, and I recalled my dead shipmates, and hoped that they had found a billet in heaven which they richly deserved."

Hundreds of miles to the south, in Harwich, the men of depot ship HMS Maidstone mustered in a shed in front of their commanding officer. He read out a brief signal – *Hostilities are to be suspended forthwith* – then asked the sailors to give three cheers for the King, and one more for the Submarine Service. The entire shed shook. A band struck up the *National Anthem*, sung with unparalleled gusto, before the festivities continued outside as the musicians led the sailors around the depot, even mounting a piano on a trolley.

Yet for all the frivolity, for all the glee, torpedo officer Lt Cdr Stephen King-Hall felt rather melancholy. "I don't suppose I shall ever quite realise exactly what I do feel and what the fact that it is all over really means," he confided in his diary.

The celebrations in Essex continued long into the night. Officers donned fancy dress and headed for the Alexandra Hotel where the wine *Kaiser, 1918* (bottled in Holland) proved a particularly popular tipple.

Then for the first time in four and a half years, portholes were opened and the dark waters of the Essex port danced under a yellow glow that night. The harbour at Harwich, home to the eponymous force of cruisers, destroyers and escorts which safeguarded the North Sea, was "a blaze of light". For an hour, the siren of every ship in harbour hooted, every bell rang, while rockets, flares, and searchlights waltzed in the November sky.

Across the North Sea, Richard Stumpf read the armistice terms. At one stroke his revolutionary fervour evaporated. The conditions, he wrote in his diary, were "shameful".

His comrades were still rejoicing the revolution sweeping through Germany. He did not join in. "This is what you get for your god-damned brotherhood of nations," he screamed at the 'reds', before skulking into a corner, sobbing.

## A GERMAN VISITOR

### AN ICY RECEPTION

#### THE FINAL SORTIE

The armistice conditions which Richard Stumpf found shameful were indeed punitive: never again would German *Schlachtschiffe* and *Schlachtkreuzer* challenge Britain's naval supremacy. Never again would German submarines threaten merchant sailors on the High Seas. The U-boat fleet would be surrendered, the surface fleet interned. If Berlin refused to comply,

the Allies would occupy Heligoland, the island fortress in the mouth of the Elbe.

Berlin complied. After dark on Friday November 15, *Konteradmiral* (Rear Admiral) Hugo Meurer arrived in Rosyth in the light cruiser Königsberg – a replacement for her namesake sunk by the Royal Navy on the Rufiji in east Africa. Meurer and his staff were immediately ushered aboard Queen Elizabeth. The Germans were almost dazzled by the most powerful electric lamps the ship's company could find to light the gangway. The light bounced off the bayonets of a line of thick-set Royal Marine sentries. The official artist Sir John Lavery hastily sketched the scene as the battleship's captain Ernle Chatfield and Rear Admiral Hubert Brand, wearing their ceremonial swords, icily received the German admiral, before the vanquished were led up the companion ladder to the admiral's dining cabin. There, seated at a table beneath a portrait of Nelson, was David Beatty.

"Who are you?" asked Beatty.

"*Konteradmiral* Hugo Meurer."

"Have you been sent by Admiral von Hipper as his plenipotentiary to arrange the details for carrying out the terms of the armistice which refer to the surrender of the German Fleet?"

"Yes"

"Pray be seated."

Meurer was tired, weary – with a voice to match. He droned on and on. He complained about the blockade of his country. Men, women and children were dying of starvation and dropping dead in the streets, he protested. There were simply no children aged under six. And, almost in tears, he lamented that the country he loved had been utterly destroyed. David Beatty was inclined to feel sorry for his defeated foe. But then he reminded himself of atrocities in Belgium, the sinking of the *Lusitania*, the plight of British prisoners. "Thank God for the British Navy," he thought. "This is your work. Without it, no victory on land would have availed or ever been possible."

Meurer and his staff departed the flagship and returned to their cruiser to mull over the terms.

The next day, in a fog thick even by the Forth's standards, they returned via the destroyer HMS Oak, willing to, Beatty noted, "agree to anything". The admiral showed no mercy to his foe – all suggestions by the Germans to ameliorate the armistice terms were brushed aside. Beaten and dejected, Hugo Meurer picked up the pen to sign the instrument of surrender. Twice he put the pen down, unable to put his name to the document before finally scribbling his signature. He left Queen Elizabeth in silence, the fog still blanketing the Forth and shielding the German from line upon line of "the finest ships in the world". Six days hence, for better or worse, Germany would deliver her Fleet to the Allied powers.

For the last time, the leviathans of the *Hochseeflotte* gathered in the roadstead at Wilhelmshaven – ten ships of the line led by the Seydlitz,

mauled at Jutland. Next came half a dozen cruisers, then a good 50 torpedo boats. It was, one junior officer observed, like watching "an endless funeral procession" – 50 kilometres in length. The mood this Tuesday, November 19, was not matched by the weather: brilliant sunshine. Heligoland, the forbidding fortress island at the mouth of the Elbe, "glowed in all colours, lit up by the rays of the sinking autumn sun," *Vizeadmiral* Ludwig von Reuter recalled as he led his forlorn fleet into captivity. The ships "steamed out into the North Sea as they had so often done during the war, silently, majestic, only this time not to fight for home and people."

Hans Hermann Ludwig von Reuter – Ludwig to all who knew him – was younger than his appearance, and a shock of closely-cropped white hair in particular, suggested. He was, however, as thoroughly Prussian – formal, correct, upright – as official portraits implied.

Reuter came from a military family, not a naval one. His father died in the Franco-Prussia war, his two elder brothers joined the army, but not young Ludwig. From the age of 16, the sea would dominate his life – so much so that he was well into his 40s before the von Reuter household echoed to the sound of young voices.

At Jutland he led a squadron of scouting cruisers into battle, though it would be long after dark on May 31 1916 before his flagship Stettin was in action, grappling first with HMS Southampton, then with the guns of two German battleships who mistook the cruiser for a British submarine.

The rest of von Reuter's war was relatively uneventful, save for one day in November 1917 when he saved his outgunned and outnumbered cruisers from the guns of the Grand Fleet, losing a solitary trawler on a sweep of the North Sea.

War would not define Ludwig von Reuter's place in history, however. With the guns silent, the *Admiralstab* asked him to perform a final duty for the Fatherland: to guide the German Fleet into the arms of its erstwhile foe.

Von Reuter struggled with his conscience. In the end duty and honour prevailed. "Personal feelings had to step to the rear," he wrote. He would command the forlorn force.

## U-BOATS FIRST

### 'UNBEARABLE SHAME'

Long before dawn on Wednesday November 20, the cruisers of the Harwich force cast off and headed for the coast of Lowestoft.

Sixty miles to the east, an *Oberleutnant zur See* (lieutenant) guided the luckless U122 eastwards – towards captivity.

"The shame, the humiliation is unbearable," he wrote in his log.

"I wonder how the English will behave? What a day of triumph for them."

He would soon have his answer.

Continued on page iv



Continued on page iv

In the half light between night and day loomed the outline of a weather-worn German steamer. An airship – ‘a British Zepp’ – droned out of the mist and circled overhead, while motor launches with prize crews bobbed around in the North Sea, waiting to take charge of their new vessels.

Then the cry: “There’s a ruddy Fritz.”

The men of HMS Firedrake rushed to the port side of the destroyer to see the unmistakeable sight of a long, low black hull with a dome-shaped conning tower in the middle. “The Huns,” wrote Stephen King-Hall, “had come.”

Twenty of them came in all, in four lines of five. And now their crews would surrender their U-boats.

Stephen King-Hall and 20 men clambered into a launch and crossed to the 1,100-ton U90, one of Germany’s more successful boats; 29 merchantmen had gone to a watery grave under its guns and torpedoes.

It would claim no more. U90’s captain, “a well-fed-looking individual” who wore the Iron Cross proudly on his tunic, assured his captors his boat would not sink, would not break down and – above all – there were no “infernal machines” (booby traps) aboard.

With that the *Reichskriegsflagge* – the German battle flag – was hauled down, the White Ensign hoisted in its place and craft which for so long had been the bane of the Admiralty sailed tamely into captivity.

The waterfront at Harwich was crammed with curious onlookers. They did not cheer. They were silent. With dusk falling they watched as one by one the German submarines were moored at buoys – the press would dub it ‘U-boat Avenue’ – and their crews taken off.

A launch came alongside U90. For the last time, the German commander gathered his effects, turned to look at his submarine, and saluted. King-Hall and his comrades returned the compliment. The U-boat man bowed before the motor boat carried him and his men away to prison camp.

## A MIGHTY FLEET

### ACTION STATIONS

#### AN IGNOBLE END

The fetters were still waiting for the *Hochseeflotte*. It trudged wearily across the North Sea one last time, bound under leaden skies for a point some 40 miles east of May Island in the Firth of Forth.

The *Matrosen* would be greeted by a sizeable Allied force to escort them into captivity. The reception planned would be a symbolic demonstration of the magnitude of their defeat.

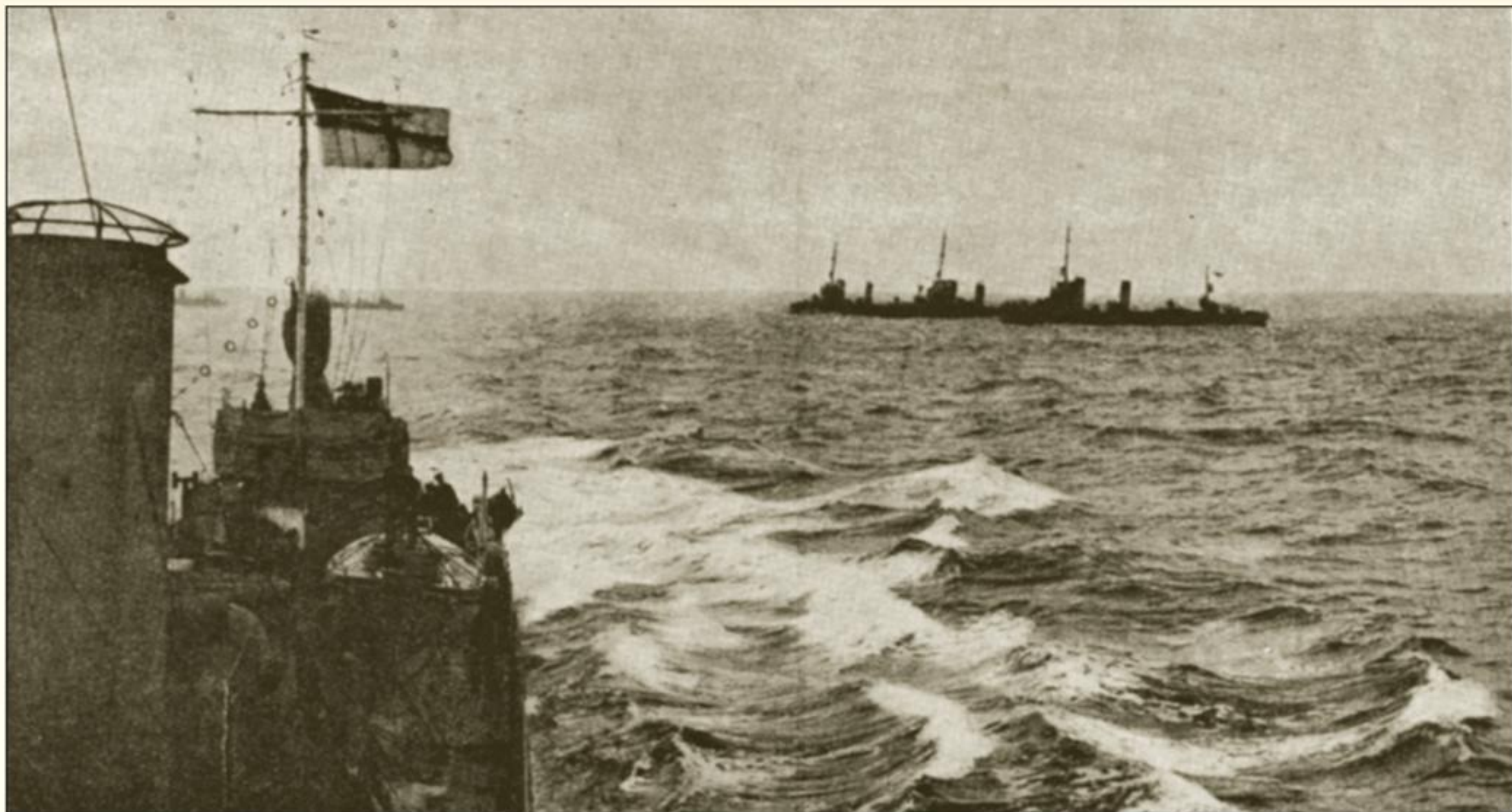
As the sun struggled to break through the dawn mist of November 21, ‘Action’ sounded for the final time in the passageways and mess decks of light cruiser HMS Inconstant. The men donned their anti-flash kit, gas masks, helmets and closed up at their battle stations. The two 6in and six 4in guns were trained in the direction from which the foe was expected, the ammunition stacked ready for loading just in case “the Hun had something up his sleeve for us,” wrote Lt J G D Ouvry. The Hun did not, to Ouvry’s surprise. “It seemed too wonderful for an extremely powerful fleet to give themselves up without a blow.”

The Hun did not have anything up his sleeve because he was simply overwhelmed by the scale of the force dispatched to usher him into captivity. From the bridge of torpedo boat B110 junior officer Friedrich Ruge watched as “squadron upon squadron, flotilla upon flotilla” closed in around the line of German warships – 40 capital ships, 160 destroyers, light cruisers – 250 men o’war in all, plus aircraft and airships. Perhaps, Ruge convinced himself, such a force was “grudging recognition of the former power of the High Seas Fleet”.

On the ships of the Grand Fleet, there was no grudging recognition, no respect for a vanquished foe. Only contempt. Scorn. Loathing.

Victor Hayward stood beneath the 13½in guns of HMS Tiger’s Q Turret and looked across to the German warships sailing into captivity. The sides and superstructures were “streaked with rust”. These were not the ships Hayward had seen four years before at Kiel Week, the Kaiser’s summertime review intended to rival the Royal Navy’s gatherings in the Solent. “It was,” thought Hayward, “an ignoble end to a majestic fleet that had fought so well at Jutland.”

Midshipman Andrew Yates,



● A British destroyer shepherds two German counterparts towards the Firth of Forth

aboard the battleship Malaya, agreed. “That the second naval power in the world should ‘pipe down’ to the first without striking a blow is unparalleled,” he wrote in his diary. “You would have thought that death would be preferable to the position in which the enemy sailors now find themselves.”

During a pause in proceedings, Rear Admiral Edward Francis Bruen returned to his cabin aboard the cruiser Minotaur to pen a few words to his wife Pansy. Bruen’s mood was melancholic, not euphoric, as the curtain came down on a drama which, for the most part, had been “unutterably dull and monotonous”. He continued:

**A play that has lasted 4½ years in performance and which has been rehearsed and prepared for for two generations. A play in which the stage is the world wide sea, and the props everything from men’s souls to the finest production of their brains, and from millions of tons of coal to the ruin of the 50,000 ships that lie mouldering at the bottom of the sea.**

The vast fleet of captors and captives steamed slowly westwards. The men were convinced they could hear the roll of Drake’s drum – the British mariner’s traditional battle call – echoing down the line of warships.

Aboard the German ships there was no mistaking the sound of cheering coming from the vessels of the Grand Fleet. “A sense of shame should have drowned this ecstatic shouting,” Ludwig von Reuter sneered. Who were the English to celebrate, he asked himself, for here was a Fleet which had shattered the myth of Royal Navy supremacy at Jutland.

David Beatty felt no sense of shame. This was the crowning moment in a naval career spanning more than three decades.

Two years before, on the bridge of HMS Lion, the admiral had turned to Ernle Chatfield as the North Sea closed over the crumpled remains of HMS Queen Mary and remarked, with typical sangfroid, “There seems to be something wrong with our bloody ships today.”

Now his men were closed up, the guns of the Grand Fleet were at 15 seconds’ notice to fire – should the Hun attempt anything. Perhaps David Beatty hoped they would. Once more he turned to Chatfield, now commanding officer of HMS Queen Elizabeth. “If we had met them in October, how long do you think they would have lasted?” Chatfield pondered his master’s question for a second. “I would give them about 20 minutes, sir.”

By mid-day, the prisoners were in their prison at Inchkeith, surrounded by a ring of steel, but also steamers, fishing vessels, yachts, rowing boats, packed with sightseers.

The Grand Fleet dropped anchor on both sides of the Forth Bridge before Queen Elizabeth sailed through the lines to her anchorage. As she did, the sailors cheered while David Beatty stood on the battleship’s bridge, doffing his cap to acknowledge them,

before issuing strict instructions to friend and foe alike:

**The German Flag will be hauled down at sunset today, Thursday, and will not be hoisted again without permission.**

At 3.57pm – sunset – David Beatty, his staff, and the ship’s company gathered on the quarterdeck of HMS Queen Elizabeth. The bugle sounded. The White Ensign was lowered. For once the ebullient Irishman was subdued, almost downcast. He addressed the men briefly, then turned to return to his cabin. As he strode towards the ladder, he stopped and turned about. “Didn’t I tell you they would have to come out,” he said with a wry smile.

At the same time the crew of B110 watched in silence as the *Reichskriegsflagge* – “the symbol of a great empire and a crowded history, under which their comrades had fought and died on all the oceans of the world” – was lowered. No-one knew that day that the flag would be raised again defiantly.

## ‘DER TAG’

### AN INCOMPLETE VICTORY

In years gone by, German naval officers had drunk a toast to *Der Tag* (the day) – the day when the *Hochseeflotte* would dispatch the Grand Fleet and banish the spell of Trafalgar.

But now *Der Tag* meant something different. It meant the greatest defeat in maritime history, the meek surrender of an entire fleet. British newspapers bristled with contempt. “No really great nation would have tolerated such a degradation to its flag,” snarled *The Naval and Military Record*. *The Globe* went even further: “The German Navy is not only defeated, it is dishonoured for all time, alike by the foulness of its fighting and by its cowardice in the day of its doom.”

Souvenir postcards were churned out, newspapers produced commemorative supplements, but for most men in the Grand Fleet *Der Tag* was a terrible anti-climax.

They had yearned for victory, they had yearned for a victory as great and glorious as any in history. This was a great victory. But it was not glorious.

“I suppose the Grand Fleet will go down to history as the classic example of sea power which was so powerful that it was exercised without any fight worth mentioning,” Midshipman Ian Sanderson in the battleship Malaya observed. “Which may be very jolly for historians but distinctly unsatisfying for the ships’ companies.”

“There can be no naval officer who does not see the end of this war without a feeling of incompleteness,” First Sea Lord ‘Rosy’ Wemyss noted. Incomplete, yes, but the amiable Wemyss assured David Beatty that the Royal Navy had won “a victory greater than Trafalgar – though less spectacular”. Not that the public grasped the scale of Britain’s victory at sea; already Wemyss could sense that the Army was enjoying the laurels of triumph rather more than the Senior Service.

“The unthinking do not perhaps realise what the nation – indeed

the whole world – owes the British Navy.”

David Beatty left his men in no doubt about what the nation owed them. Three days after the pageant of surrender, the admiral corralled the officers and men of the First Battle-Cruiser Squadron aboard HMS Lion.

They had, Beatty assured them, achieved a victory “which has surpassed anything that has ever occurred before”. The Great War, as it would come to be known, had been won not by the armies on land but by the might of sea power.

“England owes the Grand Fleet a great, great debt,” Beatty told his men. He corrected himself. “*The world* owes the Grand Fleet a great debt.”

He had always said the German Fleet would come out again. “They are out.” The men laughed. “And they are now in.” The men laughed again. “They are in our pockets.”

This was not, however, how David Beatty expected victory, to see the foe “shepherded like a flock of sheep” into incarceration. There, the admiral promised his sailors, the Germans would “enjoy – as we have enjoyed – the pleasures of Scapa”. The men laughed.

And there they would be shown no pity.

The Hun deserved contempt and scorn at worst, cold courtesy at best.

“Every time you feel sorry for them, remember what they have done in the past,” Beatty implored. “No clapping them on the back, giving them a cigarette and calling them ‘old chap’.

“Remember that the enemy you are looking after is despicable, nothing more or less.”

For a week the U-boats filed into Harwich under their new masters – the number eventually would rise to more than 110. The Stour estuary was awash with abandoned submarines – “a warning,” wrote Stephen King-Hall, “to any who would challenge our sea power”.

## GERMANY SEETHES

### THE REICH ‘UNBEATEN’

#### REFUSES TO ACCEPT DEFEAT

A thick bank of fog spared the Germans further ignominy in the Forth. Few pleasure steamers dared to brave navigating the crowded estuary in this mist, but one irate Scotswoman raised her fist at von Reuter’s flagship and shook it angrily.

For four days, the German Fleet waited at anchor before finally being ordered north by their gaolers. Only now did the *Hochseeflotte* learn its destination: Scapa Flow.

The Germans came to loath Scapa as the Grand Fleet had already done over four and a half long years of conflict. They found it “forbidding and grim”. The landscape was bleak. The sky was grey.

The sky was grey too in Berlin. As the half-light of a December dawn mingled with mist and light rain, soldiers began to form up in the grounds of a manor house.

Chaos ruled in the German capital. Soldiers and sailors drove through

the streets in lorries “waving red flags and cheering and shouting vehemently”, while in cars young men – perhaps no older than 18 – roamed, either in field grey or in civilian clothes, brandishing rifles. “The true masters of Berlin are indiscipline, vice and chaos,” one officer noted.

Today, Tuesday, December 10, order would momentarily return as the city welcomed home the first sons of Berlin, the *Garde Kavallerie Schützen Division* (Guards Cavalry Rifle Division). Young girls cleaned the men’s saddles, dressed the horses, or wiped the gun barrels with their cloths. They fixed flowers and ribbons to the soldiers’ helmets.

Down the great Charlottenburger Chaussee, the boulevard through Berlin’s Tiergarten park, marched the soldiers, the strains of *Deutschland, Deutschland über alles* accompanying the stamp of jackboots on the avenue.

Waiting for them in Pariser Platz, the huge square in the shadow of the Brandenburg Gate, were 100,000 Berliners, swaying to and fro, jostling for a better view of the returning soldiers.

On the south side of the square, a jovial, rotund figure with a bushy, comb-like beard sat on a small platform, brandishing a paper. As the troops entered, Friedrich Ebert, the first chancellor of the fledgling German Republic, stood up and shouted across the throng.

“Your sacrifices and deeds are without example,” he told the soldiers. “No enemy has beaten you.”

And as the ‘undefeated’ soldiers marched and the people cheered, away from Pariser Platz more than 60 Berliners were laid to rest in the city’s cemeteries.

The armistice had brought an end to war, but it had not brought peace. In victory, the Allies showed no mercy to their foe. The blockade of Germany would continue – to prevent the ‘unbeaten’ foe resuming hostilities. “Germany,” War Secretary Winston Churchill told fellow MPs, “is very near starvation.” In many cases, Germany was *beyond* starvation. More than 10,000 Berliners alone died of hunger that winter. They would keep on dying until the blockade was lifted in July.

As Britain’s sailors continued to strangle Germany, her politicians and admirals considered the fate of the German surface fleet – 74 vessels in all – now lying at anchor in Scapa Flow.

Like the Fatherland, the *Hochseeflotte* was dying. The skeleton crews – just 75 men to care for a *Schlachtschiff* – were unable to maintain the vessels properly. They received little post, no newspapers, no alcohol and suffered a dreary diet. Dirt, apathy and discontent thrived.

Aboard the 27,000-ton *Schlachtschiff* Prinzregent Luitpold one leading hand seethed. He seethed at the manner of Germany’s defeat. He seethed about the “drivel” written in the English press. Above all, he seethed with thoughts of revenge.

“Perhaps,” he mused, “a time is coming when the cards will be shuffled differently.”

## NEED FOR A FLEET

### THE SHIELD OF BRITAIN

#### PASSING OF AN ERA

David Beatty spent the winter touring the UK beating the Royal Navy’s drum. In London, in Edinburgh, in Liverpool, he addressed the crowds and stressed the need for a strong peacetime fleet.

“The Navy is a shield, not a rattling sabre,” he told the people of Liverpool. “We are a sea race, we came into being by the sea, and we exist by the sea.”

Even as Beatty spoke, however, the apparatus of victory was being dismantled.

The Grand Fleet ceased to be in April 1919 – the Atlantic, Home and Mediterranean Fleets replaced it.

The *Hochseeflotte* ceased to be two months later. Rather than allow his ships to be pared among the victors, Ludwig Reuter ordered his men to scuttle the entire fleet: 15 of 16 *Schlachtschiffe* and *Schlachtkreuzer* sank, five out of eight cruisers, and more than half the 50 destroyers interned at Scapa Flow. To Germans this act of mass suicide erased “the stain of surrender”. To Britons it was yet another example of Hun treachery, cowardice and underhandedness. “Germany expects that every man this day will do the dirty,” *Punch* acidly remarked in its inimitable style.

The ‘grand scuttle’, as it came to be known, erased for all time the threat of the German Navy. And it erased for all time the threat that an Allied Navy, bolstered by former German battleships, might one day pose to the Empire.

With no threat – there would not be a war for at least a decade, the mandarins of Whitehall declared – the axe was quickly wielded, despite David Beatty’s warnings.

The war had crippled Britain financially: her debts rose elevenfold. Something had to give. The naval budget was slashed – it fell fivefold in the space of three years. The Treasury scythe cut through the steel of two dozen capital ships, broken up, sold abroad, sunk as target ships. No vessel was safe.

On the second day of 1923, tugs hauled a faded grey leviathan along the Firth of Forth to her last resting place.

For a brief while she had been the queen of the high seas, the pre-eminent warrior. Now she was unwanted, unloved. She had given her name to an era. She had raised the stakes in the great naval game between Britain and Germany, nudging the two rival empires one step closer to Armageddon. Now she nudged only the jetty as the tugs pushed her alongside.

Shipbreakers waited in the January murk. In minutes they would begin tearing her apart and HMS Dreadnought would be no more. With her demise, the era which bore her name passed.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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THE GERMAN FLAG WILL BE HAULED DOWN AT SUNSET TODAY, THURSDAY, AND WILL NOT BE HOISTED AGAIN WITHOUT PERMISSION.